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# HASSAN:

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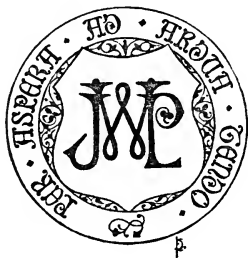
## THE CHILD OF THE PYRAMID.

AN EGYPTIAN TALE.

BY THE HON. C. A. MURRAY, C.B.

AUTHOR OF

'THE PRAIRIE BIRD,' 'TRAVELS IN NORTH AMERICA,'  
ETC.



IN TWO VOLUMES.

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# H A S S A N ;

OR,

## THE CHILD OF THE PYRAMID.

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### CHAPTER I.

THE TWO FRIENDS RETURN WITH THEIR PRISONERS TO THE PYRAMIDS—DIVISION OF THE SPOIL BY THE KIAHIA PASHA—HASSAN PROVES HIMSELF IGNORANT OF THAT VALUABLE PROVERB ‘CHARITY BEGINS AT HOME.’

IT was mentioned in the last chapter that the solitary Arab whom Hassan had thrown from his horse and had left bound in the adjacent valley had wandered from his party to drink at a neighbouring well ; that well being at no great distance from the scene of the affray, Hassan and the Georgian determined to proceed thither, and to pass the night, the state of the wounded rendering it impossible to carry them back direct to the Pyramids. Thither, accordingly, they bent their course, the wounded being placed and supported on the quietest horses. They found the prisoner bound in the spot where they had left

him, and he was not a little surprised to see his comrades and all their booty captured like himself. He bore it, however, with the resigned indifference common to Oriental fatalists. It was written, *ergo* it must be ; *ergo* it had been.

When they arrived at the well, arrangements were made for the night encampment. The prisoners were all placed, disarmed, in a body, with a strong guard over them, and they were told that any attempt at escape would be punished by instant death. The horses were picketed, and Hassan entrusted Nebleh to his own groom, with orders to sleep close to her, and with one eye open ; over these, also, a guard was set, which was relieved every two or three hours, Hassan and the Georgian agreeing to watch each one half of the night. The barley and bread captured from the Sammalous was more than ample for the wants of the party, and half-a-dozen torn-up shirts supplied the bandages necessary for the wounded.

The night passed without incident or interruption, and the following day they pursued their course leisurely to the Pyramids, where their arrival with their captives and booty created no little sensation. After consulting with Hassan, the Georgian sent off a fresh horseman with a letter to the Kiahia, informing him of the result of

the expedition, and requesting that one or two surgeons might be sent to attend the wounded of both parties ; he also desired to know the Pasha's pleasure whether he should convey the prisoners and re-captured booty into Cairo, or to the divan of the governor of the province at Ghizeh.

The generous Georgian did not tell Hassan that in his account of the affray he had given the whole credit of its success to our hero, both from his having laid and carried out the plan, and crowned it by killing the Sammalous chief with his own hand.

Those who have lived or travelled in the East will exclaim, 'This is unnatural ; no Oriental was ever capable of so unselfish a trait.' Rare fruit in that clime we admit it to be ; nevertheless the exception does not disprove the rule, and in this veracious history the reader must take our word for it, that however contrary it may appear to general experience, truth, modesty, and unselfishness may be found in the East—that is, among the Arabs, Turks, and those brought up with them. He that would seek such fruit farther East—that is, in Persia, had better settle his affairs before he starts, and be prepared for a journey of indefinite duration and worse than doubtful result.

Having dispatched this messenger, and sent another to the villages which had been plundered by the Sammalous, to desire their Sheiks to come on the following morning to identify and claim their lost property, Hassan and the Georgian proceeded without delay to render such assistance as lay in their power to their wounded comrades; in this work of humanity they found an efficient co-adjutor in Müller. That active and ready little personage was no sooner made acquainted with the state of affairs, than he put in requisition the contents of Mrs. Thorpe's medicine-chest, plundered Emily and her maid of all the linen available for bandages, produced from his own bag a case of surgical instruments, and, with his shirt-sleeves tucked up to the elbows, set about his task with the coolness and promptitude of an experienced practitioner.

For most of the wounds, after cleaning them, cold bandages were his panacea, and these he applied with remarkable skill and expedition. In two instances he had to employ probe and forceps for the extraction of a pistol ball; in these he was equally successful, and he plied his hands and instruments with so much industry, that when, after the lapse of four or five hours, two surgeons, one an Italian, the other Greek, arrived, having



galloped all the way from the river, they found that all the wounds capable of being dressed were dressed, and all that remained for them was the painful and thankless task of attending the dying bed of two of the Sammalous, whose cases had been from the first beyond the aid of man, and who died in the course of the ensuing night.

Hassan, as soon as he had been released from his attendance on the wounded, was summoned to Mr. Thorpe's tent to give an account of the expedition and the affray, which he did with his accustomed modesty, passing lightly over his own share in them, and praising the gallantry of the Georgian and his comrades ; but when he came to relate the chase, and what might be termed his flying duel with the Sammalous chief, his eye sparkled, and he told his tale with a force and vigour that produced the liveliest interest and excitement in his auditors. Emily held her breath, and gazed on the speaker in silence, and even the impassive Mrs. Thorpe exclaimed—‘ God bless me, how wonderful !’

When he had concluded his narrative, Mr. Thorpe said—

‘ Hassan, you mentioned that the chief's bullet grazed your side ; in attending to the wounds of others, have you seen to your own ?’

‘Oh, mine is a mere scratch,—I have not even looked at it,’ he replied.

‘The very words you used before,’ said Mr. Thorpe, shaking his head, ‘when you had a ball in your shoulder which threatened to cripple you for life; I insist upon it that now you allow Müller to examine it.’

‘To please you, and to show you that I am grateful for the interest you take in me, I will do so,’ said Hassan, rising, and he went with Müller into the adjoining tent. On examination, the latter found that our hero, though not seriously injured, had very narrowly escaped; the ball had, as he termed it, grazed his side—that is, it had carried away the skin and some of the flesh, but the wound was not serious, and the application of some lint and a plaster was all that Müller thought necessary. He returned to give his report to the Thorpes, while Hassan retired to sup with his friend the Georgian, who had already invited the doctor to join their repast.

On the following morning at daybreak the messenger returned, bringing an answer from the Kiahia to the effect that Hassan and the Georgian, together with those who had accompanied them, were to convey the prisoners, horses, and other booty to the Governor’s divan at Ghizeh, where

the Kiahia proposed himself to attend, and to superintend the proceedings. The village Sheiks having arrived, the party set forth accordingly to Ghizeh, and on arriving, Hassan was surprised and pleased to find there his chief, Delì Pasha, in attendance on the Kiahia. The hearty old Pasha welcomed Hassan with a smile, saying—

‘Welcome, my son; you have done well, and have made my eyes glad.’

The Kiahia then sat down in the centre, with Delì Pasha on one side and the Governor on the other, Hassan and the Georgian standing near their respective chiefs. The proceedings commenced by an inquiry into the amount claimed by the several Sheiks as having been stolen from their villages.

It were an endless task to relate the falsehoods and exaggerations uttered by each of these worthies as to the losses they had sustained; certain it is that five times the amount of money recovered would not have satisfied their claims. Hassan and the Georgian laid before the Kiahia the bags which they had found on the persons of the Sammalous, as well as the prisoners and the dead; some of them were distinguishable by marks and seals; these were restored to their owners, and the others distributed according to the best

judgment of the Kiahia; still the claimants were dissatisfied, and one old Sheik said—

‘Would it not be well if your Excellency ordered these two young Mamelukes and their soldiers to be searched?—perhaps they have secreted some of the money.’

Hassan and the Georgian cast on the speaker looks of silent contempt, but the impetuous Deli roared out, ‘By my life, thou son of a dog, thou deservest to have thy white beard rubbed in the kennel! Dost thou think that these brave youths would risk their lives to recover your dirty piasters and then steal a portion of them? and if they had been thieves like thyself, dost thou think, thou father of asses, that they would have brought those piasters with them to this divan?’

The abashed Sheik held his peace, and soon afterwards slunk out of the court.

The mares and foals claimed by the villagers were next distributed, and with less confusion and contention than the money, as being more easily identified. This ceremony being over, the Kiahia Pasha said—

‘As the goods of the villagers have now been restored, the persons and property of the Sammalous thieves are at the disposal of the government—the prisoners are condemned to three

years' imprisonment. Kawàsses, take charge of them, and remove them to Cairo. Now, Hassan and Reschid (addressing the Georgian), stand forth.' The young men obeyed. 'Hassan,' continued the Kiahia, 'the mare of the Sammalous chief whom you killed is yours; there are twenty-five horses, with arms and accoutrements, belonging to the Sammalous, of these fifteen are for you, as you took the principal lead in the expedition, the remaining ten are for Reschid.'

'My lord,' said Hassan, hastily, interrupting the Kiahia, 'pardon my freedom of speech,—it is not just that I should take one horse more than Reschid; he is my senior, and he commanded your Excellency's men,—he fought and risked his life as I did; whatever lead I had in the expedition was owing to his modesty and friendship; as we divided the duty equally, I beg your Excellency to divide the horses equally.'

The Kiahia smiled aside to Delì Pasha, and replied, 'Wallàhi! Hassan, your sentiment is friendly and good, but it is out of my power to comply with your wish; there are twenty-five horses, how can I divide them equally?'

'May your servant speak freely?' inquired Hassan. On receiving an approving sign from the Kiahia he continued—'Four of the brave soldiers

who fought with us fell in the affray; they will have left behind them perhaps poor parents, perhaps poor families, I would beg your Excellency to give me eight of the horses, the same number to Reschid, and to allow the remainder to be sold in the horse-market and the money be given to those poor families.'

'Mashallah!' said the Kiahia, 'you have spoken kindly and wisely; it shall be done as you wish. Do you and Reschid take all the horses, choose each your eight, sell the remainder yourselves, and give the amount to the families of those on whom Allah has had mercy.'\*

Hassan bowed, and was about to retire, when the Kiahia again called him and Reschid before him, saying to them, 'You have both done well, and the Viceroy is pleased that those who do good service should be rewarded; my khaznadar has orders to pay you each five purses (25*l.*) on leaving this presence.'

The young men answered with the customary 'may your years and honours be abundant,' and withdrew. Hassan having received permission to

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\* Mussulmans, when speaking of those who have died in their own faith, always use the expression in the text, and never speak of them as 'the dead'—which latter expression is used when speaking of Christians, heathens, or animals.

send his mare and his eight horses into Delì Pasha's stable, went back with Reschid to the Pyramids in order to take leave of his English friends, while the Kiahia and Delì Pasha returned to Cairo.

Our hero and Reschid, whose liking for each other had already ripened into a warm attachment, rode side by side, conversing on many topics, when the former suddenly said to his companion, ' Reschid, I know not how you may feel, but I do not like being paid in money for doing our duty in scattering, capturing, and killing those thieves of Sammalous, and methinks it were a more fitting reward for those soldiers who shared our danger, and who have got nothing. What think you if we were to divide among them these purses which have been given to us, and allow some additional share to the wounded ?'

Reschid eagerly embraced and seconded the proposal, saying, ' You are right, Hassan, we have all that we need under the shadow of our Pashas, the money will be better bestowed among these fellows, whose trade it is to take hard blows for money.'

The idea was no sooner conceived than it was put in execution. Halting under a clump of palm-trees, they called up the men, and after a few

words of encouragement and praise for their good conduct, divided among them all that they had received, reserving, as they had proposed, a somewhat larger share for the wounded. As they again rode forward towards the Pyramids, one of the horsemen said to his fellows—

‘ If our Pasha would give us leaders like that young Hassan, we would follow them to the last drop of our blood. How unlike he is to our Captain, whose hands are idle in the fight, and busy only in griping the money.’

Hassan was very anxious to learn something of his new friend’s origin and early history ; but the latter was not able to satisfy his curiosity, answering with a smile to his inquiries, ‘ Our fates seem somewhat similar. You tell me that you are a foundling, and know not your parents. I am much in the same case ; for I was brought over here from Stamboul, in company with two of my sisters, when I was four or five years of age—the elder was betrothed and married ; the younger was destined for some great harem, but she fell in love, married secretly—I know not whom—escaped, and has never since been heard of. As I never could learn the name of her husband, I have not been able to trace her.’

‘ As our fates are alike, so let our hearts be



alike,' said Hassan, cordially ; 'and may Allah some day re-unite us both to those whom we have lost.'

'So may it be. You are not a woman, and not very like one either,' replied Reschid, casting his eyes on the athletic proportions of his companion ; 'and yet my heart leaned towards you from the first moment I saw you. Inshallah ! now we are friends, we will see each other much and often.'

'I should be truly glad,' answered Hassan ; 'but our intercourse will soon be interrupted, for Delì Pasha goes shortly to Siout as Governor, and I am to accompany him.'

'You will not remain there long,' said Reschid ; 'neither you nor your chief. Mohammed Ali likes him and his blunt ways. You will see that he will not leave him long at Siout.'

Thus conversing, the friends arrived at the Pyramids, where the report of their generosity to the soldiers and the wounded was soon spread over the whole encampment.

## CHAPTER II.

HASSAN HAS A CONVERSATION WITH THE DUMB BOY,  
AFTER WHICH HE EXHIBITS HIS CAPABILITIES AS A  
KHAZNADAR.

ON the morning succeeding the events related in the last chapter, Hassan, after taking leave of the Thorpe party, and recommending them to the especial care of his friend Reschid, returned to Delì Pasha's palace, on the banks of the river, where he was cordially welcomed by his chief and by Ahmed Aga. The fame of his exploits, if so they may be termed, had already spread over the whole house, and, indeed, had been painted in glowing colours by the old chief himself to his daughter, who thus unconsciously fanned a flame which already burnt only too strongly from the fuel which her own heart and imagination supplied.

Perhaps there was no greeting of all those which met him on his return which pleased him more than that of the little dumb Murad, who looked up into his protector's face with eyes that scarcely required the aid of the tongue's interpretation, as his nimble fingers signed the words,

‘Allah give you a long and prosperous life—I have heard all, and oh, I am so happy.’

Hassan patted the head of his young *protegé*, and inquired what he had been doing during the last few days. The little boy had much to tell, and it required all Hassan’s attention to follow and understand the language of those fingers, whose rapidity of motion almost confused his sight. Murad had taken many messages, and got into high favour with old Mansour, the eunuch, who knew that he was himself the unintentional cause of the hurt which the dumb boy had received. Finding him very faithful and intelligent in the execution of commissions, Mansour had sent him frequently to the city, to bring trifles and samples for the ladies of the harem, and had even conducted him into the presence of the ladies themselves, his present age not rendering that step objectionable.\* He had taken some silks to

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\* Up to the age of ten or twelve boys are freely admitted into the oriental harems. After that age no males are admitted, saving fathers, husbands, and brothers of the inmates. The privilege is sometimes extended to some other near relation, who is then termed ‘Mahrem,’ meaning ‘one who is admitted to the harem.’ Neither is it to be supposed that brothers, or even husbands, can intrude upon a lady’s privacy at pleasure. If she be of high rank, her husband cannot enter her boudoir without sending to ask permission. I speak now of Turkish harems especially.

Zeinab Khanum, and some otto of roses\* to Ayesha Khanum (probably the two wives of the Pasha); also, some beads and turquoises to the lovely Amina Khanum.

‘To whom?’ cried Hassan, grasping the little boy’s arm with a gripe which almost paralysed it.

‘To the lovely Amina Khanum,’ repeated Murad, astonished at Hassan’s outbreak. ‘And is she not beautiful as a houri?’

‘And did you speak with her?’ said Hassan, releasing the boy’s arm, and striving to master his emotion.

‘In truth I did,’ he replied, ‘and she spoke to me kindly, and pitied my want of speech, and said she could almost weep for me.’

‘Allah! Allah! would that I were twelve years old, and dumb,’ ejaculated Hassan.

‘What said you?’ inquired Murad, looking up into his face with astonishment.

‘Nothing—nothing, boy; go on and tell me

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\* This is one of the many instances which our language affords of the changes which words undergo in passing from the Arabic into European tongues, especially when the words contain that impracticable *ayn*, to which the reader’s notice has already been called. This word is written in the original *ayn*, *t*, and *r*, and should therefore be rendered *âtr*, or *ôtr*. Some English dictionaries correctly write it ‘attar.’

what passed with Am——, with the lady you were speaking of.'

'Oh, she patted me on the cheek, and made me tell her what happened on the day that you saved Mansour from the soldiers; and she asked me whether you had been kind to me; and what could I say of my protector but that you had been to me more than a father or a brother? And she asked me where you were gone, and whether there would be bloodshed, and when you were coming back; and I wrote all my answers on slips of paper (for I have taught my finger-talk to none but you), and while she was reading them her breath was quick, and her colour changed, and she was so agitated—by Allah! just as you are now, Hassan. What has happened?' added Murad, timidly, 'have I said anything to offend you?'

There was much of what had fallen from Murad that was music to Hassan's ear and balm to his heart; yet a sort of dread came over him when he reflected how he had betrayed his feelings, and she hers, to a child, and one whose vocation it was to go from house to house and place to place with messages and commissions! Looking steadily into Murad's eyes, he said,

‘Were you alone with the lady when this passed?’

‘I was,’ he replied, ‘for some time; two of the slave-girls were occupied with making up a dress at the other end of the room, but they were too far to hear what the lady said to me, and you know, Hassan, they could not hear what I said to her.’

The substance of this reply somewhat reassured Hassan, while its closing words moved his compassion. Fixing his eyes earnestly, yet kindly, on the boy’s countenance, he said to him, ‘Murad, do you love me?’

‘Better than my life,’ replied Murad, eagerly seizing his protector’s hand, and pressing it to his lips. ‘Whom should I love, if I love not you? I have none on earth to care for, none to love, if it be not Hassan.’

‘Then I charge you, by that love,’ said Hassan, solemnly, ‘never to communicate what you have told me, and what you have observed, to any human being—not even to Mansour. Were you to do so,’ he added, with a stern and almost fierce expression on his countenance, ‘much as I pity and love you, Murad, I would rend your limbs asunder, and give them to the vultures.’

Although equally hurt and surprised by the unwonted tone of his protector's language, Murad looked up in his face with a calm, untroubled countenance, and using his little fingers with unusual slowness and precision, he said, ' Kill me now if you doubt me ! I am not noble nor honourable in birth, but I have a heart. Has Hassan forgotten our proverb, ' The good man's breast is the secret's tomb ?' '\*

' Enough,' replied Hassan, in the usual tone of kindness in which he addressed his young *protegé*. ' I will trust you, and did wrong to doubt your truth. If you are again called to the Lady Amina, serve her and obey her faithfully in all things ; but never communicate to any living creature what she may say or ask about me. You are too young to understand the

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\* The original word rendered *good* in the translation of this fine proverb signifies more usually 'free,' 'noble,' 'honourable;' in fact, includes those qualities which ought to be comprised in the character which we designate as a 'gentleman.' And here I may add, that after studying with some care the proverbs of many European nations, I am bound to say, that in variety of illustration, in terseness and felicity of diction, those found in the Arabic language surpass every other. In many cases, especially those of a comic and vulgar class, the humour is too coarse for translation ; but in other instances, as in the one quoted in the text, the sentiment is as noble as the language is felicitous.

dangers, the intrigues, and calumnies of a harem—only remember that one unguarded expression from you might be the cause of misery and shame worse than death to her.’

Hassan, having received a message from Delî Pasha, dismissed his little *protégé*, and presented himself before his chief, who began talking to him on the subject of his expedition against the Sammalous, and in the course of conversation asked him what he proposed doing with the eight horses taken from them, to which Hassan replied, that it was his wish to send them as a present to his foster-father among the Oulâd-Ali.

‘That is well,’ said the Pasha, smiling; ‘youth should repay the bread of infancy. But what mean you to do with the beautiful mare, Nebleh?’

Hassan thought for a moment, and then replied, ‘She is, indeed, beautiful and swift beyond any horse that I have seen, but she is small and light, too much so to bear me either after an enemy or an antelope—too much so even to bear your Excellency with freedom. Here Hassan cast his eyes on the large and vigorous, though somewhat corpulent proportions of his chief. ‘I was thinking that it would be well if your Excellency were to make her a present from yourself to Mohammed Ali, for it does not become one in my rank to



make him such an offering. His Highness is small and light in person ; nor do I believe that he has a mare like Nebleh in his stable.'

'Wallàhi ! you say well,' replied Delì Pasha. 'Nebleh would fly under him ; it shall be as you wish—but as she is your property, if I present her from myself I must buy her from you. How many purses shall I give you for her?'

'Under your Excellency's favour, I have no need of money,' replied Hassan, with an abstracted, melancholy air, that struck the Pasha. 'Some day I may have a favour to ask of you—then, if you choose, you may pay me for Nebleh.'

'As you will,' answered Delì Pasha. 'I will write a letter to his Highness, which you shall deliver yourself with the mare—he is coming to Shubrah\* in a day or two. Now,' continued the

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\* Shubrah, a very pretty garden on the right bank of the Nile, about three miles below Cairo, which was planted and laid out with some taste by a Greek gardener, under the instructions of Mohammed Ali. He built a small country house at one extremity, and a very handsome kiosk in the centre of it, containing a large basin of water. At the four corners of the kiosk were richly furnished apartments, in one of which was a billiard-table, at which the old warrior used sometimes to recreate himself during his latter days with his officers or guests. After his death the garden was neglected and almost destroyed. Its present condition the author knows not.

Pasha, 'you must go to your office, for the Nazir (steward) of my village in Karioonbiah, has been here with the year's account,—you know how I hate accounts—so I told him to wait your return. Look through his accounts, receive his money, and send him back.'

Hassan had scarcely taken his seat in his office and was beginning to look among his papers for the last year's accounts of the above-mentioned village, when a servant announced to him the expected Nazir. On entering he made a profound and ceremonious salam to Hassan, and remained standing until the latter desired him to be seated ; and when he obeyed this order, it was with a feigned reluctance that he placed himself in the attitude of most respectful humility by sitting on his heels, carefully covering them with the edge of his robe, and his hands with its sleeve. Hassan, rather surprised at this overstrained humility, bestowed upon the Nazir a scrutinizing glance, the result of which did not predispose our hero much in favour of his visitor.

While the usual pipe and coffee were being offered and discussed, a few indifferent and customary phrases were exchanged, and Hassan had more opportunity for studying the countenance of the Nazir ; it offered one difficulty to his

scrutiny, as the eyes squinted so remarkably that he could not tell when they were looking at him, or when directed elsewhere. Though not superstitious, Hassan was not free from the strong prejudice entertained by all his countrymen against this unpleasant peculiarity in the organs of vision,\* and he noted that in the Nazir it was accompanied by a pinched nose, a narrow forehead, and a mouth round which a false, sneering smile perpetually played. The servants having retired, the new-comer began, after his own fashion, to take (as a sailor might say) the soundings of Hassan's character.

‘A very pleasant office this, O Aga, upon which you have lately entered.’

‘Pleasant enough for those who prefer the pen and the carpet to the lance and the desert,’ replied Hassan.

‘There is a time for all,’ answered the Nazir. ‘Your respected predecessor found it so; he was fond of both; he and I were great friends.’ He laid much stress upon the last two words, which

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\* Squinting is considered in the East an ill-omen, and those affected by it are generally avoided. ‘May you be blind,’ or ‘may you squint,’ is not an unfrequent Arab curse. It is curious that the word for ‘squinting’ is identical in the French and Persian languages, ‘*louche*.’

did not raise him much in the estimation of Hassan, who had already discovered among his papers not a few proofs of his predecessor's dishonesty. While assuming a careless air, he resolved to watch his man more narrowly.

'Doubtless,' he said, 'those who serve the same chief should be friends together.'

This observation, which was merely general, misled the Nazir into a belief that he was understood, and met half way.

'What a good chief he is to serve,' said the Nazir, with his sneering smile. 'Open hands, and eyes closed, never looks into an account, that is the kind of master I like.'

'Yes,' replied Hassan; 'I believe he trusts a great deal to his agents without looking after his own affairs.'

'Wallàhi! that he does,' said the Nazir; 'and as he has plenty, why should not others also eat bread? Do you know,' he added, lowering his voice, while his eyes, apparently directed towards the door, were fixed upon Hassan; 'do you know how much your predecessor had for his share out of our village last year?'

'No, I know not,' replied our hero; 'I have not looked through the accounts.'

The Nazir smiled at his companion's simplicity, as he said—'Accounts, indeed! Oh, they are all right and signed by me, while mine are signed by the Sheik-el-Beled.\* We must all three be friends, you understand. The village is rated to pay Delì Pasha two hundred purses a-year (1000*l.*), but we easily raise a great deal more, and that we divide amongst us for our trouble. Last year we got each of us fifty purses and, Inshallah! by your good fortune, we have as much this year.'

'You must explain more to me,' said Hassan, dissembling his indignation under a semblance of simplicity. 'I do not understand all the details of your village affairs; I had understood that in the new measurement of the lands, which the Viceroy ordered to be made throughout Egypt a few years ago, far heavier demands were made on the fellah than under the old measurement; how comes it, then, that your village produces so much

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\* Every beled or village in Egypt has its Sheik, or head man, who is responsible for the payment of the taxes, rents, and dues, as well as for the military recruits leviable on its population. Generally speaking, these Sheiks are the greatest rascals and tyrants in the country, though they themselves are frequently oppressed and beaten by their Turkish masters.

more than is written against it in the books of the Defterdar ?”\*

‘The land was then only half cultivated,’ replied the Nazir, ‘and was rated at only three ardebs† the feddan (acre). Since then Delì Pasha has spent much money on it in irrigation, and he is quite satisfied that it produces, as you see in our books, five ardebs, but we generally get seven out of it, and besides this there are many methods which we employ for getting an honest penny here and there out of the village. The recruiting time is our best harvest, for then all those who do not wish a son or a brother to be taken must pay the Sheik well, and I have my eye always steadily fixed upon him to see that he shares fairly with us.’

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\* The Defterdar at the period of our tale was a relative of Mohammed Ali, and was an officer possessed of vast power and influence. It may be added, that his cruelty was commensurate with his power. The re-mensuration of the cultivable lands had been entrusted entirely to him, and he was responsible for the revenues of the enormous extent of land which the mistaken policy of Mohammed Ali had led him to take into his own hands. Despite the energetic vigour of the Viceroy, and the severity of the Defterdar, these lands never produced one-half of the amount which they would have returned had they been farmed to a number of tenants, or to the villagers themselves.

† One hundred ardebs are equivalent to sixty-three imperial quarters.

‘Then,’ replied Hassan, ‘it is clear that the signature or seal of the Sheik is necessary for all these papers, in case they should be suddenly called for and examined. How do you propose to arrange them with me in his absence?’

‘He is on his way,’ said the Nazir, ‘and will be here to-night. To-morrow morning we will come to you together, sign the papers, pay you the money, take your receipt, and divide the little perquisite that we take for our trouble.’

He accompanied these last words with what he meant to be a knowing wink, but what was in fact a grimace, so odious that Hassan could scarcely resist the impulse, which had been gradually growing, to kick him out of the room, but his resolution to seize and convict his accomplice the Sheik, enabled him to master the impulse, so he contented himself with saying—

‘Well, bring him to-morrow morning, and we will make it all right.’

‘I will be here,’ replied the Nazir, who then rose and took his leave.

No sooner was he gone than Hassan’s indignation found vent in words, which, although not uncommon among the Arabs, are scarcely fit to be translated for ears or eyes polite. As he was not aware what spies or partisans the Nazir might

have among the servants in the house, he took no immediate step in reference to the late interview, but strolled down to the stable, and spent some time there in directing the exertions of his groom towards the rubbing and polishing the satin coats of Shèitan and Nebleh, and beautiful they both were in their several styles—the one above the ordinary size, fleet, proud, strong, and fierce in his bearing to all but one—the other gentle, sagacious, unequalled in her speed, as in the fine and delicate proportions of her limbs; still when any stranger approached, she turned to look at him, as if expecting again to see the form, again to hear the voice of her Arab lord.

Hassan understood the gesture, and went up to caress her, saying—‘Faithful creature, thou shalt see him no more, his destined hour was come, and you are separated; but you shall at least go where you will be sheltered in all seasons, nurtured with all care, fed with all fresh grasses and grains; thy sleek sides will be covered with velvet and jewels; a gold-adorned bit in thy mouth, and on thy back will be a rider like thyself—slight, indeed, and small in size, but unwearied in energy, and of a spirit unquenched by danger and fatigue—wilt thou be happy, Nebleh?’

While thus speaking, or rather half audibly



murmuring, he stood with one arm thrown over Nebleh's neck, and the other hand shading his own eyes, as his thoughts unconsciously wandered to Amina, and might have been embodied thus in words—'Were I lying on those sands where the Sammalous chief's bones now rest, would she start and turn inquiringly at every approaching step; and if afterwards they wedded her to wealth and splendour, and her robes were studded with jewels, and gold and pearls were upon her neck, would she be happy?'

Hassan was suddenly roused from his wayward and dreamy thoughts by the cheerful voice of his friend Ahmed Aga, who had come to inspect the far-famed Nebleh, and was much surprised to find Hassan apparently asleep, though standing on his feet, and his arm over her neck. 'Why, how is this, my Antar?' he cried, 'asleep, and with your arm on Nebleh's mane.'

The sudden effort made by Hassan to recover his composure was not entirely successful; besides, he was too natural to feign with his friend a gaiety that he did not feel, so he replied—

'In truth, Ahmed, I was thinking of this poor animal's former master, the Sammalous; she looks in vain for his return, and pricks her ears at every approaching footstep. Who knows what other

loving hearts in the tents are also waiting in vain for that returning footstep ?’

‘ Wallàhi !’ said Ahmed ; ‘ if thou hadst only one-half thy size, and one-quarter of thy strength and courage, thou wouldst be a charming girl, and methinks I could court thee myself, for thy heart is as tender as that of Leilah herself. The Sammalous died like a brave robber, as he was, and far happier was it for him, than to be captured and taken to Alexandria, and drag timber about the arsenal with two heavy chains round his ankles. Come, be pleased to remove thy giantship from the side of thy pet, that I may see her fair proportions.’

Hassan, relieved and restored to his wonted good humour by the bantering tone of his friend, complied with his request, and after they had stood for some time commenting on the beauty and symmetry of the Arab, they returned slowly together towards the house. On the way, Hassan, having first ascertained that Ahmed was but slightly acquainted with the Nazir, told him all that had passed, and at the same time communicated to him the plan that he had formed for the morrow.

‘ You may remember,’ he said, ‘ that in my office is a recess, covered over with a curtain, be-

hind which, unobserved by any of the servants, I wish you to place yourself. There you will hear the rascality of these two confessed by themselves, even if they have not signed or sealed enough to convict them. At a signal from me you will come out; we will then seize them, and deliver them over to the Pasha, to be punished as he sees fit.'

'With all my heart,' said Ahmed. 'On my head be it; and, Inshallah! that squinting rogue's feet will get a lesson that will mend his morals.'

On the following morning Hassan's plan was carried out with complete success; and scarcely had Ahmed Aga ensconced himself in the curtained recess of Hassan's office than the Nazir entered, accompanied by the Sheik-el-Beled. The latter was what would be usually termed in Egypt a respectable-looking man, for one of his class; his turban and his dark serge robe well became the gravity of his countenance, and it required a close observation to detect the cunning that lurked in his small dark eyes. The servants who brought the pipes and coffee having retired, the Nazir entered, without preamble, into the business which had been discussed at the interview of the preceding evening. He had not proceeded very far in his discourse when Hassan, interrupting him, said—

'This is a serious affair; it will not do to have

servants coming in with messages until we have terminated it. I will lock the door.' While he was doing so, the Nazir said to the Sheik in an undertone—

'The young greyhound takes well to the game; after he has tasted blood (here he rattled the money in his bag) he will be keener yet.' A grim smile, accompanied by 'Inshallah!' was the Sheik's reply.

In order that the unseen auditor might hear the whole scheme of fraud developed, Hassan now caused the Nazir to repeat what he had stated on the preceding day, under pretext that he had not thoroughly understood its details. Our hero also put from time to time a question to the Sheik, whose replies, brief though they were, proved him to be a thorough participator in the villany of his colleague, and rather led Hassan to think him the deeper rogue of the two.

The discussion being closed, they now, as the Nazir said, 'proceeded to business,' *i. e.*, to the signature of the falsified accounts, which ceremony was accompanied by the delivery to Hassan of a bag containing fifty purses (250*l.*), which the Nazir drew from an inner pocket of his ample vest. Hassan weighed the bag in his hand without untying it, then placed it in a niche of the wall

above his head.\* The Nazir and the Sheik having attached their seals to duplicate copies of the accounts, the latter were handed to Hassan to be certified by him in a similar manner.

‘Before doing so,’ said he, ‘I will call another witness to my sealing. Ahmed Aga, come forth.’

No sooner did the two accomplices see the Mirakhor emerge from the curtain than they knew they were detected and lost. The falsified accounts were in Hassan’s hand, and it flashed across the Nazir’s mind that if he could recover and destroy them, proof might be difficult where two would have to swear against two, and quick as thought he threw himself on Hassan, as the latter was rising from his sitting posture to his feet; but Hassan had his right hand free, and the unfortunate Nazir never knew what a right hand it was until he found himself lying prostrate and bruised at the furthest end of the room. Ahmed Aga burst into a fit of laughter.

‘Mashallah!’ he said, ‘a cheating, squinting, cut-purse dog like you to lay your dirty hands

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\* The reader is doubtless aware that in Oriental houses there exist neither tables, chairs, cupboards, nor shelves. The latter are replaced by niches and recesses of various forms and sizes, made in the walls of the room; and in well-furnished houses these niches exhibit goodly rows of china, glass, scent-bottles, &c. &c.

on our Antar. Ha ! ha ! ha ! Come, sir,' he continued, addressing the discomfited Nazir, 'give me up that sword, which you are unworthy to wear, or we shall have you trying to stab some one in the dark.'

Having received the fallen Nazir's sword, he opened the door, and calling aloud, ordered two servants to bring cords to tie the hands of the two miscreants, and conduct them to the presence of Delì Pasha, whither they themselves at once proceeded, Hassan bearing with him the bag of money and the falsified accounts.

Whilst Hassan was narrating to his chief the manner in which he had been cheated by these scoundrels for years past, the Pasha's brow was clouded, and the blood rushed up to his very temples. The written proofs of their guilt having then been laid before him, and Ahmed Aga having testified to having heard from their own lips a confirmation of Hassan's statement, Delì Pasha called aloud to his attendants to take the culprits into the court below, and to give them each 250 blows on the feet, 'and mind that they are well laid on,' he added, sternly. Then turning to the prisoners he said, 'You have owned to having continued this robbery for some years ; after your punishment you will be shut up for a

week, during which time you will find means to refund each 100 purses, the avowed spoil of the last two years ; if you fail to do so, I hand you over to the Mehkemeh (the public tribunal), where, as you well know, the galleys will be your fate. Begone !'

In a few minutes the shrieks and cries of 'aman' (mercy) that arose from the court satisfied the Pasha that his orders were faithfully executed, and he turned with a cleared brow to Hassan, whom he warmly praised for his fidelity and intelligence, adding—' You have well deserved that bag of fifty purses, and I would willingly give it you, but I know, my brave lad, that the offer would offend you ; if, however, it would give you pleasure to wear an old soldier's sword, that has drunk no little Wahabee blood in its day, you are welcome to it. I know it could not be in better or in braver hands.' As he said this he unbuckled his sword and gave it to Hassan, who pressed the holy legend on the blade\* to his lips and forehead, saying, ' May your honours increase with your life, and may I never be unworthy of your favours.'

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\* Most of the finely-tempered Oriental blades, especially those of ancient manufacture, have stamped upon them, near the hilt, ' There is no God but Allah,' or some short sentence from the Koran.

### CHAPTER III.

HASSAN FINDS HIMSELF INVOLVED IN AN INTRIGUE  
THREATENING DISAGREEABLE CONSEQUENCES.

WE must now transport the reader to the interior of a house, or rather a palace, which stood, and indeed still stands, on the banks of the Nile, about a quarter of a mile from the site of that which we have before described as being occupied by Delì Pasha. This palace was larger and better built than others in the neighbourhood; its foundations of solid stone formed a kind of pier capable of resisting and controlling the waters of the Nile in their wildest mood, so that a person eating cherries at one of the windows facing the river might drop the stones into the flood below. At the back of the palace was a large garden filled with orange, lemon, citron, and pomegranate trees, and protected by a high wall, while the lateral front of the building, on which side the windows were all closely latticed, commanded a view of the streets and of the passengers coming to and going from the port of Boulak.

In a private apartment of this palace, adjoining



the ka'ah, or large central saloon, sat a lady, apparently between thirty and thirty-five years of age, the character of whose remarkable countenance it might have puzzled the ablest physiognomist to read and define ; for though the features were not regular in detail, yet they were not wanting in a certain beauty of harmony, and though they betrayed strong passions, they denoted a still stronger will to command them. The eye, though small, was full of fire, and though the stature was below rather than above the average height, yet the form seemed imbued with command, and the gestures, though imperious, were not devoid of grace.

Opposite this lady, whom for obvious reasons we shall so far involve in mystery as to give her no name but that of the Khanum, sate or rather crouched at a respectful distance the figure of a little old woman, whose features were a true index of her odious character. She was what is called in Arabic a Dellaleh or saleswoman, a class who frequent Oriental harems for the ostensible purpose of selling to the inmates jewels, silks, shawls, and toys of all descriptions, but are usually employed as the medium of all love affairs or intrigues in which the imprisoned beauties are or wish to be engaged.

‘And is he then so very beautiful?’ inquired the Khanum, with apparent listlessness.

‘My lady, I am told that he is indeed beautiful as Youssuf,\* and strong and valiant as Antar, nevertheless the down of manhood is newly written on his lip.’

‘Pray who may be your informant as to this wondrous youth?’ said the Khanum, in a tone in which curiosity was veiled under a semblance of haughtiness.

‘May it please you, my lady, it was Ferraj, the confidential servant of Osman Bey, who has seen this youth called Hassan, both in the street and at the jereed play; and Ferraj is a man who has eyes—Mashallah! he is not blind. I have before now served him in luring birds of beauty to his master’s net, and—’

‘Peace, woman,’ said the lady, sternly. ‘Think you that I care to hear the intrigues of that ruffian Bey?’ then dropping her voice to a lower key, she added, ‘Well, I will see this youth—I

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\* Among the Orientals, Youssuf, *i. e.*, Joseph, was and still remains the proverbial type of manly beauty in the prime of youth. In the Eastern legends the frail helpmate of Potiphar has been changed into a lovely and high-born maiden, called Zuleika. The loves of this couple are referred to in one of the most eloquent chapters of the Koran, and have since been celebrated by Arab and Persian poets innumerable.

think you called him Hassan. When can you bring him hither ?

'It is not difficult, lady ; to-morrow if you will—unless he is absent on duty. Ferraj says that though all are afraid of him if he is angry, yet he is goodnatured and simple as a child, and that if I only tell him that some one is in danger or trouble, he is sure to come at once.'

'Well, be it for to-morrow,' said the lady, impatiently ; 'only let me know in time whether you have succeeded.'

'And if I do succeed,' said the crone, 'and if he be as beautiful as I have said, what will the generous lady bestow on her slave ?'

'That,' replied the Khanum, pointing to a small European purse, ornamented with pearls which lay upon a stool of ebony, inlaid with mother of pearl beside her, and through the network of which a certain number of gold coins were visible. 'Go now, be silent and faithful, or . . . you know me.'

'That do I,' muttered the crone between her teeth, as she made her salam and left the room. 'I know thee for the veriest dragon that ever wore the form of woman.'

That same evening, when Hassan retired to his small sleeping-room, he felt as happy, if not hap-

pier than ever he had felt before; he had rendered to his chief an important service, and had received from him a sword of honour, not a gaudy holiday weapon, but a trusty blade of the finest Damascus temper, with which he hoped to carve his way to honour, distinction, and Amina.

As the image of the latter rose to view in his imagination, an irresistible impulse led him to close his door, mount the steps, which he withdrew from behind his bed, and look through the aperture at the well-known window of his beloved. To his surprise and delight the lattice was open, and he could distinctly see the lovely form and features of Amina as she reposed upon a low ottoman; two candles in high silver candlesticks were on the carpet beside her; no other figure was visible, but Hassan knew that she was not alone, as he heard a voice addressing her in a low tone, which he fancied (although he did not catch a word) he recognised as that of Fatimeh Khanum.

In explanation of the open lattice, it must be remembered that Amina's apartments were high from the ground, and that on the side of the outer palace on which they looked, there was not a single window, save only the aperture made by two displaced bricks, through which Hassan had already drank so many deep draughts of love.

Now he could hear Amina's sweet voice replying to her companion; but he saw that a kerchief was applied to her eyes, and that she was weeping bitterly. At the same time he thought—nay, he was sure that he heard his own name uttered by the other speaker. Smitten with grief, and abhorring even the thought of eavesdropping, he came down from the steps, and replaced them behind his bed, on which he threw himself in an agony of conflicting emotion.

‘Allah! Allah!’ said the unhappy youth. ‘I have caused her tears to flow, for whose happiness I would sacrifice my life.’ He then thought of the words of Fatimeh Khanum—of the high destinies reserved for Amina—of his own unknown birth and humble fortune; thence his thoughts passed to the kindness and trusting confidence shown to him by her father. ‘And shall it be said that I, Hassan, rewarded him by trying to steal the affections of his only daughter, the prop and pride of his old age. Oh, why did I see her lovely face—why did I hear her sweet voice—why did I respond to her song. Allah! Allah! I have done very wrong—I have been blinded, bewitched, deprived of my reason. Ye cursed steps, ye have brought me to this evil.’ So saying he rose in haste, and, after ascertaining

that there was no one in the passage, he carried out the steps, and replaced them in the same corner whence he had first removed them.

More than half the night he spent in framing resolutions to tear the image of Amina out of his breast, or, if this proved impossible, as his heart whispered to him it would be, at least to bury it within him, and permit no temptation to induce him to seek a return of his ill-starred passion. 'Inshallah! I will never cause her to shed another tear, unless some bullet or lance removes me from the earth, and she drops one on my grave.' With these resolutions on his lip, Hassan fell asleep, and dreamt of Amina. Dream on, Hassan, for thy waking hours will teach thee that all thy good and self-denying resolutions, however purifying and elevating they may be to thine own heart, are unable to rescue thee from the toils that Cupid hath cast around thee. The fly may escape from the web of the spider, or the bird from the fowler's net, but for thee there remaineth no rest save in Amina's arms—or the grave.

The Easterns have a proverbial saying, that Fortune when serving Vice rides on an Arab horse, and when serving Virtue rides on a camel, the moral of which is, that she is generally swift

to aid the vicious in their undertakings, whilst she is more slow, though more sure and steady, in aiding those of the virtuous. In illustration whereof, it fell out that on the following morning Hassan rose early, and strolled in a musing mood on the road which led along the bank of the river to Boulak : he did not observe that he was followed by two persons at a little distance, an old woman and a man habited as a servant. 'That is he,' said the latter, in a low voice to his companion, and immediately withdrew.

Hassan walked slowly forward, and just as he came to a part of the road where passengers were few, and an unfrequented by-street led from it at right angles, he felt his elbow lightly touched by some one from behind, and turning round he saw a woman respectably dressed, and covered with a long black veil, whom he knew at once from her round shoulders and stooping gait to be advanced in years.

'What would you with me?' he inquired.

'I have a message for the private ear of Hassan,' she replied, 'if he will accompany me for a few paces up the street.' And without waiting a reply she walked on before him.

The Dellaleh, for she it was, felt that she required great caution and tact, in order to secure

the acquiescence of Hassan in her demand ; for she had ascertained some particulars of his habits and character, whence she inferred that if she abruptly proposed to him any affair of gallantry he would turn on his heel and leave her. Having reached a secluded part of the street, she stopped and said, ‘ I have been asked by a lady, who is in trouble, to see Hassan, and inquire whether he is disposed to render her a service.’

‘ I do not understand or love mysteries,’ replied Hassan, frankly. ‘ Who is the lady, and what service does she require at my hands? Has she not father, or brother, or sons, or friends, that she asks you to apply to a stranger?’

‘ My son,’ said the old woman, modulating her voice to its softest tones, ‘ know you not that in our country there are cases where ladies are deprived by fate of all these supports which you name; know you not our proverb, ‘ He is thy brother who befriends thee, not he who came forth from thy mother’s womb’?’

‘ True, my mother,’ said Hassan, smiling; ‘ yet I would fain know what service is required of me—is the lady oppressed, and has she need of my sword?’

‘ I am not in the Khanum’s confidence,’ replied the wily crone. ‘ She has, I suppose, heard of



your courage and fidelity, and wishes to consult you on some matter touching her honour or safety.'

'If that be so,' answered Hassan, 'I am ready—lead on.'

'Not now,' she replied, 'spies are about; and you yourself know that it would be impossible to admit you to the door of the harem in the day time. Meet me this evening at sunset under the large sycamore by the river on the road to Boulak, and I will conduct you to the house.'

'I will be there,' answered Hassan; and the crone left him to make report of her success to her employer.

'I have half a mind not to do it,' she muttered, as she went. 'So young, so handsome, so unsuspecting; and, after a few days revelling in wine and luxury, to be consigned to the cord or the deep well.' A shudder passed over her frame, but the tempter was at hand—if aught so foul and hardened as she could be said to require a tempter—the purse of gold flitted before her eyes, and she pursued her course to the side-door of her patroness's house. Admitted at once to the presence of the latter, she reported the success of her mission, adding, 'He will be here just after sunset.'

‘Is he then so well-favoured as he had been described?’ inquired the Khanum.

‘Mashallah! you shall see with your own eyes, lady; my words are weak to describe what you will see.’

‘It is well,’ said the Khanum. ‘Go; I shall expect him at the hour.’

‘What strange folly have I now committed,’ said Hassan to himself, ‘in offering to assist this unknown person, and risking my neck within the walls of a harem? However, I have promised, and they shall not say that I held back from fear.’ So saying, he secured his dagger within his sash under his inner-jacket, buckled on his old sword, leaving the splendid jewel-hilted present of Delì Pasha in his room, and sallied forth to the place of appointment, enveloped in a dark-coloured aba or cloak. He found the old woman under the tree, and followed her through several streets without exchanging a word, until they reached the postern door before mentioned, at which she tapped three times; it was opened immediately by a Berber bowàb, or porter, beside whom stood two Nubian eunuchs of large stature.

‘Follow your conductor,’ whispered the crone to Hassan; ‘my task is done.’ And so saying

she withdrew from the door, which was closed and bolted.

Fear was a sensation as foreign to the heart of Hassan as to that of any man who ever walked on earth, but the closing of the bolts behind him, and the grim smile which he observed on the faces of the swarthy eunuchs, made him for a moment repent of having embarked in this mysterious enterprise ; but recovering himself immediately, and placing a hand on the hilt of his dagger, he followed his guides in silence ; they led him through several winding passages, and at last to a curtained door which opened on the larger room before described as the saloon of the palace, and, making him a sign to enter, retired. Four large candles in silver stands of unusual height lighted up the further part of the saloon, by the side of which stood several trays loaded with the finest fruits and rarest sweetmeats, while on another were ranged rows of sherbet-bottles of various hues, and others that might contain the forbidden juices of the grape ; all these things Hassan noted with a rapid glance, and also that for the present he was the sole occupant of the splendid apartment.

‘ If the lady be mistress of all this wealth and

luxury,' said Hassan, half aloud, 'how strange that she should need aid or service from one so humble as myself.' He then walked forward over the soft and silent carpets towards the lights, and with the curiosity of youth began to examine the fruits, which surpassed in beauty all that he had seen, and wondered how such could be collected and procured in the end of November.

Hassan was not aware that while the lofty saloon in which he stood reached to the roof of the Palace, there were adjoining rooms and closets of half the height, like the entresol of the houses in Paris, and that, through the beautifully painted lattice-work which ornamented the sides of the saloon, there was a person sitting in one of those dark closets above, who, unseen herself, could see every feature of his countenance as he stood in the full glare of the wax-lights.

'Wallàhi!' said she to herself, as a dark fire flashed from her eyes, 'for once that old daughter of Shèitan has not lied. None so handsome have I seen in this land;—who, whence can he be? Bakkalum' (we shall see). So saying she left the closet, ordering the eunuch who stood without to give her the key. With regard to the corresponding rooms and closets she well knew that they were closed, and the keys with her. This

strange woman trusted none of her female slaves in her intrigues, they were all sent to another part of the house ; the only confidants of her criminal amours being four powerful black eunuchs and the porter of the postern door.

Meanwhile Hassan began to weary of his splendid solitude, and finding his head almost giddy from the effect of the aromatic odours which rose from a censer burning in the room, he threw open the large latticed casement which, from the sound of the rushing waters, he rightly judged to look out upon the Nile. A young moon was rising, and not a boat was visible ; the thought of the grim eunuch below flashed on his recollection, and as he looked out of the window on the turbid stream boiling below at a distance of thirty feet, a smile passed over his face. Retiring from the casement, he found himself suddenly standing before one whom he at once knew to be the lady of the palace.

Her appearance has already been described, and it is scarcely necessary to add that she had not, on this occasion, neglected to embellish it by all the resources of art ; her dress was tasteful rather than splendid, and only one or two jewels of price betokened the rank and wealth of the wearer ; her hands were by nature small and

graceful, to which point a single brilliant of the purest water attracted the eye, and the natural fire of her dark eyes was now heightened as much by the passion which burnt within them as by the kohl which had shed a darker hue on their lids, and on the arching brows above.

‘Pardon me, lady,’ said Hassan, ‘if I have done wrong in opening the casement,—my head is not accustomed to these odours of aloes and frankincense, and I admitted the air of heaven. If you fear the cold I will close it.’

‘I have no fear of cold,’ she replied, as a ray confirming her words shot from those piercing eyes; ‘let it remain open, but come and sit down on this divan near the fruit, I have much to say to you in confidence; we can dispense with servants here; the fruits and sherbets will not spoil our conversation.’

Hassan did as he was desired, wondering not a little at the unrestrained language and manners of the Khanum, who had allowed her veil to fall from her head and to rest on one shoulder. He observed, however, that from the height of the sill of the open casement, and of the floor of the room itself, nothing of its interior, save the ceiling, could be seen from the river.

The Khanum, with all her vices, was a woman of

shrewd and sagacious intellect, and when she was in the mood few of her sex in the East could be more agreeable and prepossessing; she now employed all her powers to please her young and inexperienced companion, not omitting the artillery of her dark eyes. She observed, however, with secret spite, that the latter fell harmless on the impenetrable armour of Hassan's inexperience or insensibility.

Far be it from us to describe the revolting details of a scene in which an abandoned woman forgets her sex and makes the advances to a man. Suffice it, that when at length, after something that she had said about love, conjoined with money, pleasure, luxury, &c., Hassan understood her meaning, he replied with a cold and constrained air—

‘Lady, we have been mistaken in each other; I came here believing that you were in trouble, and requiring such aid as an honourable man might give you with sword or counsel; and you brought me here thinking that I was a minion or a toy that might be bought with gold, and afterwards cast away like a worn-out dress.’

‘Wallah! it is not so, Hassan. Whatever I have been or done before, I love you truly; and if you will only give me your love, all my time,

and wealth, and power shall be spent in making you happy.'

'Lady,' replied Hassan, with frank simplicity, 'I will not mislead or deceive you. A man cannot give what is not his; I have only one heart, and it is given away. The gold in the Viceroy's treasury could not re-purchase it.'

'Then you refuse and scorn my love,' she said, with kindling fire in her eyes. 'Beware how you awaken my hate; none have ever done so and lived to tell it. I have means at hand for bending, aye, for breaking your proud spirit. There are dungeons below which never see the light of day; a few weeks or months passed in them, with only black bread to feed on, will, perhaps, bring you to another frame of mind.'

'Khanum,' he cried, springing to his feet, 'I replied to your offered favours with frankness and with courtesy—your threats I despise.'

'Despise!' she cried, no longer mistress of her rage; 'and this to me!' As she spoke, she clapped her hands loudly together; one of the eunuchs appeared. 'The man and the cord,' she said. The slave retired.

'Lady,' said Hassan, drawing his sword, and showing her its blade glittering in the light of the



candles, 'methinks you are scarcely prudent to trust yourself so completely in the power of one whom you threaten with the cord and the dungeon; before your slaves appear I could sever your head from your body. But I have said it—I pity and despise you.'

For an instant her eye quailed beneath his stern glance; but at that moment the four black slaves, armed with swords, and one of them bearing a strong cord, entered the room.

'Seize and bind this villain,' she cried, 'who has threatened and insulted me.'

'Lady,' said Hassan, in a low, determined tone, 'you are mad. I could shout so loudly from this open window that neighbours and passengers should know what was passing in your harem. I could, nay, I must, if you force me to it, shed in your presence the blood of your slaves; but I would fain spare you. Think again, and let me depart in peace.'

Her only reply, as she arose and stamped her foot on the ground, was—'Seize him and bind him, ye cowardly slaves.'

'Ha! must it be so?' said Hassan, grasping his dagger in his left hand and his sword in his right, while his eyes shone with that fierce fire

which always animated them in the fray and in the fight. 'Come on, ye wretched slaves, and try your destiny.'

As he spoke these words, and drawing up his towering form to its full height, placed himself in a posture of defence, the Khanum cast upon him a look in which love, admiration, and hate were strangely blended ; but still she stamped her angry foot, and ordered the slaves to do her bidding.

For a moment the negroes rolled their great eyes from their mistress to the powerful and well-armed youth before them, as if the job was not much to their liking ; but their fear of the terrible and relentless Khanum prevailing, the boldest and strongest of the party advanced, whispering to his companion with the rope, 'I will engage his sword in front, while you approach on one side and throw the cord over him ;' and in this order they came forward, the two other slaves, with drawn swords, following close behind their leader.

Hassan saw their manœuvre at a glance, and, before they could put it in execution, he sprang like a tiger on the foremost, and guarding the cut which the other made at his head, he dashed

the horny knob of his sword-hilt with such terrific force on his forehead, that after reeling backward several paces, he fell senseless at the feet of his advancing comrades; at the same instant, quick as lightning, he turned on the negro, who had nearly reached his side with the cord, and with one cut laid open his right arm to the bone, the rope falling harmless on the carpet. Uttering a yell of pain the negro sprang backward to the side of the two who had not yet ventured within reach of Hassan's sword, and whose livid lips revealed their terror of an antagonist who in a few seconds had disabled the two strongest of their party.

'Come on, come on,' said Hassan, with a scornful laugh. 'This game is more to my taste than the Khanum's sweetmeats and frankincense.' But the men, instead of moving, cast their uncertain eyes on their disabled companions, and fear seemed to root them to the spot.

'Lady,' said Hassan, in a stern voice, 'there is no honour to be gained by me in wounding or killing coward slaves like these; once more I warn you bid them retire, and spare me the trouble of defiling your fair carpets with their blood.'

The Khanum looked at her disabled and trembling slaves, and from them to the bright, proud eye and commanding form of the young man ; her spirit failed her, and her pride quailed beneath his glance.

‘Retire,’ she said, ‘and carry out that body, be it alive or dead.’ The men obeyed, and the Khanum turning to Hassan, said, in a trembling voice, ‘You have subdued one who was never conquered before. What is your purpose now?—do you intend to kill me?’

Hassan, from whose brow the expression of anger had not yet passed away, looked at her in silence for a minute before he replied :—

‘Khanum, do I look like one who could strike a lady? It is punishment severe enough for you that I leave you alone with your own bitter thoughts. I know you, lady—yes, I know your name and rank, and others say what you have yourself avowed, that of those who have offended you none have ever lived to tell it. But I warn you, lady, that if you pursue me with your hate, and commission others to try and take my life, I will cleave their skulls with this good sword, and will report to the Viceroy what goes on in this house. If you choose that for the future there shall be

peace between us, we will both forget this evening, and your secret is as safe with me as if I were dead—the choice rests with you. Now, lady, I shall go away ;’—and as he spoke he moved across the carpet towards the door.

‘Stay—stay a moment,’ cried the Khanum, in affright. ‘Let me call back the slaves, and give them their orders ; the passages are long and narrow—you may lose your way ; slaves are there armed, and still unhurt ; the porter too is armed, and he alone has the secret of that door-lock.’

‘I had thought of all these things, lady,’ said Hassan, calmly, as he returned from the edge of the carpet where he had taken up his slippers,\* which he placed under his belt, tightening the latter at the same time, so as firmly to secure them as well as his dagger. ‘It is not my intention to trust to the good faith either of yourself or your armed slaves in those dark passages ; I prefer a road that is open and

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\* I suppose it is well known to the generality of readers that on entering a carpeted apartment in the East it is customary to leave the slippers near the door, or, at all events, on the stone or marble floor at the outer edge of the carpet.

familiar to me as the expanse of the desert.' So saying, he leisurely approached the open casement, and looked out to see that no boats were below or in the neighbourhood.

'Stay, stay!' she cried, looking out with a shudder on the rapid current that swept along the base of her house. 'I swear to you by the Koran and by the head of my father that my slaves shall conduct you safely out of the palace.' And perhaps she spoke the truth, for at that moment a passion, that she would have called love, and admiration for the youth's dauntless courage, had banished from her mind the affront he had offered to her pride; but he calmly replied:—

'Lady, if you are not treacherous, your slaves might be so. The Nile and I are old friends—if you are silent, and your slaves faithful, you have nothing to fear for or from Hassan.' So saying, he sprang head-foremost from the casement into the rushing waters below. Uttering a faint shriek, she looked forth from the window, and soon afterwards, at a distance of fifty or sixty yards from where he dropped, she saw by the moonlight that he had risen to the surface, and was swimming leisurely down with the swift

current of the Nile. 'Mashallah ! Mashallah ! what a man is that ! and what a woman am I !' And, for the first time, perhaps for the last, during a period of many years, that victim of ungoverned passion buried her face in her hands, and wept tears of shame and remorse.\*

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\* The sketch given of this Egyptian Messalina is not imaginary ; neither will it be difficult of recognition to any of the older residents in Cairo. The author, while passing in a boat before that window which has been made the scene of Hassan's leap, has often been told by the Nile boatmen, 'that is the window from which the bodies of her hapless lovers were thrown when she was tired of them.' The tale may be exaggerated, or perhaps invented ; but at all events it shows the reputation enjoyed by the lady in question. Her crimes were not unknown to Mohammed Ali ; for the author was once informed by a near relative of the old Viceroy, that on the occasion of some flagrant outrage similar to that described in the text, he was himself ordered by the indignant Prince to put her to death ; and it was only by dint of repeated and urgent entreaties that he succeeded in procuring a commutation of the bloody sentence to a stern and warning threat of summary punishment in case the offence should be repeated.

## CHAPTER IV.

HASSAN RETURNS UNINJURED TO DELI PASHA'S HOUSE,  
AND PAYS A VISIT TO MOHAMMED ALI—THE LOSS OF A  
SWORD NEARLY PRODUCES A TRAGEDY.

IT was during the same evening that Osman Bey, who had received orders to precede his Chief to Siout, and who was now on the eve of departure, sat in the corner of a private room in his house, leisurely smoking a chibouq, and questioning his confidential servant, Ferraj, who stood before him with his hands crossed on his breast.

‘So the old woman told you that she saw the young vagabond safe within the door of the harem, did she?’

‘It is even so, my lord, and she heard the bolts of the door shut upon him by the Bowàb.’

‘Allah be praised!’ said the Bey, with a grim smile; ‘that upstart will not cross my path again—he will never leave that house alive. Be on your guard, Ferraj, and warn that old gossip to put a key on her tongue; for if it were to be known that you or she had a hand in this matter,



your feet would be beat into a pudding, and she would sup with the fishes of the Nile.'

Leaving this worthy vice-governor to continue the preparations for his journey, let us return to our hero, whom we have most unkindly left swimming down the river on a cold November night. His course was rapid enough, and ere long he saw some lights on the right bank, which he knew to mark a *café* where he often smoked his evening pipe, and which was not very far from Delì Pasha's house; there he landed, and having wrung the water from his clothes, walked on towards the *café*, which he found occupied by only two or three drowsy smokers, the night being now far advanced.

Making his way into the host's room, with whom he was well acquainted, he asked him to afford him lodging for the night, and to lend him a dry blanket or two, explaining his present appearance and condition, by saying that he had accidentally fallen into the water.

The host, with whom Hassan was a favourite, from his quiet habits and from his always paying ready money for his coffee and pipe, willingly granted his request, and ordered a fire to be lighted, at which our hero's clothes were hung that they might be dry by daylight; as for Has-

san himself, after drinking a cup of hot coffee, he lay down on the floor in his blanket, and in a few minutes was in a sleep as profound as if he had been reposing on the softest bed in Cairo. Rising at the first grey of dawn, and making the best toilet that the circumstances admitted, he proceeded to Delì Pasha's house before any of the servants were loitering about the door, and reached his own room unquestioned and unobserved.

Very few hours elapsed before he was summoned to the presence of his chief, whom he found not in the large saloon, but in one of the private apartments adjoining, and before him stood a female figure, in whom, although she dropped her veil over her face on his entrance, he recognised Fatimeh Khanum, the Kiahia, or governess of the harem. She was about to retire, but the Pasha stopped her, saying—'It is not necessary that you should go, I have but a few words to say to Hassan, and they contain no secrets.'

The Khanum withdrew a few steps aside, while the Pasha proceeded to inform Hassan that the Viceroy had suddenly arrived at Shubrah garden, and as it was necessary that a messenger should be sent to compliment his Highness on his arrival and inquire after his health, it would

be a good opportunity for Hassan to bear the message, and also to present the Arab mare Nebleh.

‘I have written a letter,’ he added, with a smile, ‘which you will also bear, and which will inform our lord how I came to offer him this present.’

‘May your bounties always increase,’ replied Hassan; ‘on my head be it to obey your orders, but if I might be bold enough to make an observation——’ here he hesitated, and cast his eyes aside at the Khanum, as if he would rather communicate what he had to say to his lord’s ear alone.

‘Speak out, man,’ said the impatient Pasha; ‘mind not our good Kiahia Khanum. She has been long in our house, and we know her discretion.’

‘I wished to say,’ replied Hassan, ‘that your mirakhor, Ahmed Aga, is a true and faithful servant of your lordship, and he is a true and good friend of mine; it is his right and privilege to convey to the Viceroy any horse presented by your lordship. On such occasions you know that his Highness gives a liberal present to the bearer. Were you to send me with the horse it would be an unjust slight to a faithful servant,

and would give me the pain of supplanting a friend.'

'Wallah ! Wallah ! you are right, boy. I had not thought of it. You shall go together ; you may deliver the compliments and the letter, while he presents the horse.'

A happy smile came over Hassan's face at this announcement ; but before he could reply, a servant came in to say that the Viceroy's secretary was in the saloon with a message from his Highness.

Starting up from the corner where he sat, he made signs to them to remain where they were, while he went in to learn the secretary's business with him. Thus were Hassan and the Khanum again accidentally left together.

'My mother,' said our hero, addressing her in a low and melancholy voice, 'I remember well what you said to me when we last met ; your words cost me much pain, but they were wise and true. I feel how far more humble I am in rank than the priceless pearl whom you guard, and that it would be selfish in me to do aught that could mar her high fortunes. Inshallah ! I will never cost her a tear ; but there is no harm in my loving her with my whole heart and soul as the Gheber loves and worships the sun,

though he knows he never can reach it. Such is my destiny; Allah has willed it; and I could more easily pluck out my eyes from my head than her image from my heart. Tell me, then, is she well and happy?’

‘She is well,’ replied the Khanum, in a trembling voice, while she muttered to herself in an agony of sorrow, ‘Allah, Allah, what is to be done? Both these young loving hearts will be broken—for her love is as deep and passionate as his!’

Hassan saw that she was weeping; a secret instinct told him that it was not for him, and that he was loved by Amina. The ominous question shot from his eager eyes, and rushed to the portals of his lips; but by a strong and determined effort he conquered himself, and compressed within him the words on which his destiny hung. He saw that the Khanum pitied him, and that her heart was under the influence of tender sympathies, and he would not tempt her to forget her duty, and betray a secret which she was bound to preserve.

Fatimeh Khanum saw the struggle in his breast and loved him the more for it. The Pasha's returning steps being now audible, she had just time to say, ‘Allah preserve and bless

you with all good,' when he re-entered the room and resumed his seat.

'Hassan,' he said, 'I have informed the secretary of your mission to Shubrah, and he says that the Viceroy will be disengaged about the time of the âs'r, to-day (three o'clock p.m.) Ahmed Aga shall go with you, and present the mare as you propose, and you will deliver to his Highness this letter.'

Having received the letter our hero withdrew, leaving his chief to continue his conversation with the Khanum.

'What is the matter with Amina?' he said; 'I have lately found her sad and weeping.'

'How can your servant tell,' replied the Khanum. 'Perhaps my young lady is still afraid that your lordship will oblige her to marry some one whom she cannot love—you had spoken to her on some such subject.'

'Foolish child,' replied the Pasha. 'Tell her then to dry her tears, for, Wallah! I only wish to see her happy, and I will not marry her by force to any one.'

'I will convey your gracious message, and it will give her much comfort,' said the Khanum, retiring, and glad to escape from her lord's presence, for she felt oppressed by the secret of

the mutual passion of the young lovers, and dreaded lest by some unforeseen word or event it should come to light.

Like many very worthy and well-intentioned people in the East, as well as in the West, the Khanum had great faith in the future, and in what is called the chapter of accidents, and she considered a danger deferred as half overcome. Her position was, in truth, a difficult one, for she tenderly loved her fair pupil, and felt herself attracted towards Hassan by his noble appearance and high qualities, to a degree that she could not explain to herself. She would have given all she possessed to see them united and happy in each other's affection, yet she felt herself compelled to speak to Amina as she had to Hassan, and to warn her of the disparity of their stations, and the hopelessness of their passion. But in truth the Khanum's heart exercised more sway over her actions than did her judgment, and she did not refrain from speaking of Hassan to Amina, nor even from relating to her the generous trait of which she had been accidentally a witness, in respect of his conduct towards Ahmed Aga. But we must leave the harem, and accompany our hero and his friend to the Shubrah garden.

Nebleh had been washed from head to foot in

tepid water, and then rubbed dry with cloths until her coat shone like the finest satin. Her sweeping mane and tail had been carefully combed, and as she walked along by the side of the sàis who led her, with a light elastic tread that scarcely touched the ground, Ahmed Aga sighed to think that such a beautiful animal was about to leave the stable of his chief.

When they reached the garden, and mentioned their names to the porter at the gate, they were at once admitted, and found the Viceroy reclining on the crimson damask cushions of a divan in the corner of his kiosk. He was smoking a chibouq ; on the floor, at a little distance, sate a Bedouin Sheik from the neighbourhood of Mount Sinai, and a little further stood, in respectful silence, a good-looking boy, with a round chubby face and dark eyes, whose dress and jewel-hilted sword showed him to be of high birth.

Hassan and Ahmed Aga having entered and made their salaam, the former informed the Viceroy that he was charged by Delì Pasha to present his respects, and to congratulate his Highness on his safe arrival. Having said this he came forward, and, touching his forehead with the hem of the Viceroy's pelisse, delivered his letter. Mohammed Ali took it, and bending his keen



eyes on the bearer, as was his custom, with a scrutinizing, but not displeased look, he desired his secretary, who just then entered the room, to read it to him.\*

The latter did so in a low voice that reached only his master's ear, but it was easy to see, from the twinkling of his eyes and the expression of his countenance, that he was both interested and pleased by the contents. When it was concluded he simply said, 'Peki, peki' (very well, very well), then asked Ahmed Aga his business.

'May your Highness's life be prolonged. I am your servant, Ahmed Aga, Mirakhor to Delî Pasha, who has charged me to present to you, in his name, the Arab mare Nebleh, who is, I believe, mentioned in the letter just honoured by your perusal.'

'Where is she?' said Mohammed Ali; 'I would see her.'

'I left her outside the garden gate,' said Ahmed. 'The walks in your Highness's garden are not for horses' feet.'†

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\* It must not be inferred from this that Mohammed Ali could not read; for though not a good scholar, he could decipher a plainly written letter; but he rarely did so, and disuse made it daily a more troublesome and difficult task.

† The walks in the Shubrah garden were then fancifully paved with parti-coloured pebbles. These walks have all been destroyed, and carriage roads made through the garden.

‘True, true,’ replied the Viceroy. ‘Inshallah ! we will go out and see her. Come along, Sheik Abou-Fazl, you should know an Arab mare, and you too, Abbas, will like to see one.’ So saying he walked to the garden gate, followed by the party above mentioned, and preceded by a dozen of his kawasses.

When they reached the gate, Ahmed Aga stripped her of the light gold-edged cloth which he had thrown over her to keep the dust from her glossy coat, and the Viceroy’s eye then fell on her form, in whose symmetrical proportions neither envy nor criticism could find a flaw.

Mohammed Ali looked at her in grave and silent admiration, the Arab Sheik gave a strange grunt conveying a similar impression, while the young Abbas’ eyes told the same tale, though he could not venture to speak until spoken to in the presence of his grandfather. After being led about for a few minutes amidst the ‘Mashallahs’ of all who saw her, she was saddled and bridled by the Viceroy’s order, who turned to Hassan, saying—

‘We know your horsemanship well ; we should like to see her gallop and play.’

‘My lord,’ replied Hassan, casting down his eyes upon the large proportions of his frame,

‘although Nebleh could carry me, and would carry me until she dropped dead, she would look better and move more easily under a lighter rider ; if your Highness will permit this young Prince (for such I take him to be) to mount her, I think it would please him much, and would show the mare to better advantage.’

‘Well, be it so,’ said the Viceroy, adding, in a lower tone, ‘she is not violent or restive, is she?’

‘Quiet and docile as a lamb, though swift as an eagle,’ was the reply.

With eyes sparkling with joy the young Prince jumped into the saddle, and, in a moment, Nebleh was in full career ; now wheeling to the right, now to the left, at the slightest touch of the heel or bridle, and, after a few minutes, returning to the spot whence she had started, with her transparent nostril widely dilated, and her proud eye awakened by the inspiring gallop.

‘Aferin, aferin ! (well done) Abbas,’ said the Viceroy, ‘it is enough for the present. Ahmed Aga and Hassan, you may return to Delì Pasha, and convey to him our friendly greeting, and our wish that Allah may prolong his days.’

The two friends made their obeisance, and slowly returned towards Boulak.

‘Do you know who is that youth?’ said Ahmed Aga to his companion.

‘I know him not,’ replied Hassan, ‘but, from his dress and bearing, I suppose him to belong to the Viceroy’s family.’

‘You conjecture rightly, and the Viceroy is said to be very fond of him; he is the son of Toussoun Pasha, Effendina’s second son,\* who distinguished himself so much in the war against the Wahabees. Alas! his fate was a strange and sad one.’

‘I have heard,’ said Hassan, ‘that he died in the prime of life, but I know nothing more.’

‘After his successes in Arabia,’ continued Ahmed Aga, ‘he was so popular in the army that Ibrahim Pasha grew jealous of him and hated him; but what is more strange is that his own father also grew jealous of him, and of his popularity with the soldiers; perhaps his suspicions were also strengthened by the tales of slanderers, who told him that Toussoun meant to rebel against him, and dethrone him; certain it is, that

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\* It has before been noted that the Egyptians, when speaking of the Viceroy, always use the word Effendina, or Effendiniz,—the former being the Arabic form, the latter the Turkish, for ‘Our Lord.’ The English word Viceroy has been generally used in the body of this tale as being shorter and better known.

the unfortunate Prince died of poison, administered to him in some sherbet or wine that he drank during a feast given by him to some of his friends; he died immediately, and it is believed that the poison was given by Mohammed Ali's order.'

'Horrible!' ejaculated Hassan. 'Father and son! As it is not proved, let us hope it is not true.'\*

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\* It would be unwarrantable to introduce, even in a work of fiction, such a charge against the memory of a man who, with all his faults, was certainly a great and sagacious Prince, had it not some foundation in truth. But it was stated to the author by Abbas Pasha himself, that he fully believed that his father had been poisoned by Mohammed Ali's order. The author asked him whether there was any circumstantial evidence to corroborate this suspicion. 'Yes,' he replied, 'there is. The news of his death was conveyed from Lower Egypt to Mohammed Ali's confidential household officer by a swift courier. The officer, ignorant of his master's views, and afraid of the effect which might be produced on him by the sudden announcement of his son's death, proceeded to break the intelligence to him with caution, saying, 'My lord, news is arrived of Toussoun Pasha.' 'When—how did he die?' was the answer. 'How,' continued Abbas Pasha, 'could he have known or guessed that a man in the prime of life had suddenly died unless he had himself decreed it?' There was certainly force in the argument; but, as all substantial evidence is wanting, we must be satisfied with the universal Arabic conclusion on such matters—'Allah knows.' Another reflection naturally arises from this tragedy,—namely, that when we remember the energy and severity of

‘The Discoverer of Secrets (*i.e.* Allah) knows,’ replied Ahmed ; and thus in conversing on various matters they reached the house of Delî Pasha.

No sooner had they put their feet on the stairs leading to the saloon, than they became aware that something unusual had occurred ; a crowd of servants had gathered near the door of the room, and from within was heard the voice of the Pasha, pouring forth, at its highest pitch, a tor-

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Mohammed Ali's character it seems incredible that, if a favourite son, and one of the bravest commanders in his army, had been suddenly carried off by poison in the prime of life, without any order or connivance of his own, no open and diligent examination of the officers of the Prince's household should have been made, and no medical inquiry as to the causes of death have been instituted. Such domestic tragedies are so common in the East that they create but little sensation on the spot. The fate of the son resembled that of the father. There is little doubt but that Abbas Pasha, the late Viceroy, was strangled in his bed by two Mamelukes who had lately entered his service, *highly recommended* by certain persons in Constantinople. They had stolen money from his harem, and he had threatened them with punishment. They were the only two on duty close to his bedroom on the night of his sudden death. They disappeared immediately after it ; yet no real search was made for them ; no public or satisfactory medical examination of the body was allowed ; it was buried in unseemly haste, and with nothing of viceregal pomp. Crowds of sycophants flocked to the divan of the successor ; and a very short time afterwards the author was informed that one of the supposed murderers had become an officer in the Egyptian army !

rent of threatening vituperation. 'You have never seen him in one of these fits of passion,' whispered Ahmed Aga to Hassan; 'when they seize him he is mad and ungovernable.'

Hassan having inquired from one of the servants the cause of this storm, was informed that it was about a sword with a jewelled hilt of great value, which Mohammed Ali had given to the Pasha after the war with the Wahabees; it had been in charge of a young Mameluke, named Kasem, who filled the office of Master of the Wardrobe, and as it was now missing, Delì Pasha charged him with stealing it, and threatened to have him beaten to death. As this lad was one of those who had sportively attacked Hassan on the day of the jereed play, and from his frank and merry character was one of our hero's favourites, he would not believe him guilty of such a crime without the strongest proofs, and he resolved at once to hear what those proofs were.

Forcing his way through the crowd at the door, he entered the room, and his eye almost immediately fell upon the youth accused, standing apparently under arrest, between two of the servants. Hastily walking up to him, Hassan fixed his searching gaze on the countenance of the youth, and said, 'Kasem, tell me, by your life and

by your father's head, have you committed this crime ?'

' Wallah, I have not !' replied the youth, looking up in Hassan's face with a firm voice and clear, untroubled eye ; ' but our lord will not hear nor listen ; the sword has been stolen from my room, but who is the thief is only known to Him to whom the absent is present.'

During this short dialogue the Pasha had continued, like an angry lion in a cage, pacing up and down the upper end of the room as if ' nursing his wrath to keep it warm' by rapid motion as well as by curses and threats ; his eyes were inflamed, and his face red up to the very temples. These violent bursts of passion, although of late less frequent than of old, when they procured him his name of Delî (mad), were well known to his followers and servants, and while they lasted none dared to speak a word to him ; suddenly he stopped, and shouted to the youth, ' Viper ! son of a dog ! wilt thou confess thy crime, and where thou hast hid the sword ?'

' My lord,' replied the youth, in an humble yet sincere tone of voice, ' I have told you all I know ;—the sword has been stolen from my room—I know not where it is.'

' Dog of a liar !' cried the Pasha in a still



louder tone ; ‘ take him away and beat him till he confesses ; give him three hundred on the feet, and throw him into the dungeon. Away with him !’

With a hasty signal to the man who held the youth to delay a moment, Hassan came forward, and, to the astonishment of all the household, walking composedly to within a few feet of the Pasha, said to him—

‘ My lord, let me entreat you to have a little patience, and defer the punishment of this youth ; perhaps we may find the sword, or discover the thief.’

‘ And who are you ?’ cried the Pasha, astonished at this unwonted audacity ; ‘ who are you that dare to offer me your unasked counsel, and come between me and my revenge ?’

‘ I am your servant Hassan, whom you have already loaded with favours, and therefore it is that I love my lord so well that I wish his displeasure rather than see him commit an act of injustice.’

‘ Begone,’ roared the Pasha, ‘ if you would not drive me mad ; when that imp of Satan has stolen a sword, the reward of my services and my blood, am I to be told by an upstart like you that I may not punish him ?’

‘ You may punish him, doubtless,’ said Hassan, calmly ; ‘ you may punish any in your house, for you have the power ; but if you do punish him now, and after a few days we bring you the sword, or proof that it was stolen not by him, but by others—I know your generous heart—you will then suffer tortures ; you will curse this hour of hasty passion, and will say, ‘ Had I not one faithful servant to say to me, Do not stain your name with this act of cruelty ? ’ ’

During this speech the rage of the Pasha had been burning with a fiercer fire ; to be thus lectured and reprovèd in the height of his fury by a mere youth, and in the presence of all his household, was a trial to which his fierce temper had never before been exposed ; his lip grew white, and his limbs literally trembled with concentrated passion.

‘ Son of a dog ! ’ he cried, ‘ if thou wilt not hold thy peace this shall silence thee—’

As he spoke he drew his dagger from his shawl-sash, and rushed at Hassan, who was standing only a few yards in front of him.

Hassan plainly saw the movement, and with his activity and gigantic strength could easily have either sprung back a few feet and drawn his sword, or have wrested the dagger from the

feebler hand of the Pasha, but he saw before him only Amina's father. Opening wide his arms, with a calm, unblenching eye, he presented his broad chest to the descending blade ;—it fell, but harmlessly over his shoulder, for the demon-spirit had overpowered the frame which it possessed, and muttering ‘Allah ! I cannot do it,’ Delî Pasha staggered back a few paces, and would have fallen to the ground had not Hassan caught him in his arms and borne him gently to the divan whence he had so lately risen in the full tide of excited passion.

All the attendants now crowded round the insensible form of their lord, whom, by the order of Ahmed Aga and Hassan, they caused to be instantly transported to the private apartments of the harem, while servants were sent in all directions for the nearest and most skilful surgeon that could be found. Fortunately, not many minutes elapsed before the arrival of one possessed of some skill, and of presence of mind ; blood was freely taken from the arm ; soon afterwards twenty or thirty leeches were applied to the back of the neck, and before nightfall the symptoms that threatened a dangerous brain fever had passed away.

Meanwhile Kasem was confined to his room,

and a guard placed at the door ; he was a general favourite, and none believed him guilty of the theft, but as the sword had been in his custody it was judged necessary to keep him in confinement until some further light could be thrown on the case, or the Pasha's ulterior pleasure be ascertained.

In the course of two days, during which the invalid was tended by the affectionate and unremitting care of Amina, he made rapid progress towards recovery, but he observed a sullen and profound silence as to the cause of his illness, neither did he issue any orders respecting the punishment of Kasem ; but all the circumstances were already known throughout the harem, the eunuchs having gathered them from the servants, and repeated them with various additions and exaggerations to the females under their charge ; on one subject all the reports agreed—namely, that Hassan had mortally offended his chief, and that his dismissal was certain.

Meanwhile all the exertions made by Ahmed Aga, Hassan, and others to trace the missing sword, or discover the thief, had been unavailing until, on the third day after the scene we have above described, Reschid, the favourite Mameluke of the Kiahia Pasha, came to see his friend Hassan,

and the smile on his countenance announced that he had some good news to communicate.

‘Hassan,’ he said, ‘you may remember that on the evening of your Pasha’s illness I was sent here to make inquiries after his health by my lord; you then told me about the missing sword which he so much valued. One was brought to me for sale this morning by a Jew who resides in the farthest part of Cairo, which formerly belonged, as he said, to Ibrahim Elfi, the great Mameluke Bey. I doubt the story. Should you know your Pasha’s sword if you saw it?’

‘Yes,’ replied Hassan, eagerly, ‘for I have seen it more than once in the hands of young Kasem, when he was rubbing the blade to keep it bright. I know the sword even if the scoundrel has picked the diamonds out of the hilt.’

‘Come, then, with me,’ said his friend; ‘we have no time to lose, for I told the Jew this morning that I was busy, and had not leisure to bargain with him then for the price, but that he might leave it till the *âs’r* (3 P.M.), when he might return, and, if we agreed on the price, I would pay him the money.’

A short hour’s ride brought the two friends to the Kiahia’s palace, where they dismounted, and proceeded at once to Reschid’s room, in one

corner of which was a sword, in a leathern case. No sooner was the latter removed, than Hassan drew the sword from its sheath, and exclaimed—

‘Wallah! it is the same. See here, near the hilt is a lion of inlaid gold, and below the words Fath-min-Allah (Victory is from God). But, as I expected, the rascally Jew has taken the diamonds from the hilt, and replaced them by these strips of gold.’

‘El-hamdu-lillah!’ cried Reschid; ‘the character of poor young Kasem will, I trust, now be cleared.’

The Jew, having arrived at the appointed hour, was surprised to find himself in the gripe of Hassan, who threatened to shake the life out of his body if he did not confess from whom he had got the sword. The affrighted Jew, finding that denial was vain, owned that it had been brought to him by a servant of Delì Pasha’s, named Youssuf, a few days before, and that he had himself taken out the diamonds to prevent its recognition. The two friends followed up the investigation with energy. Under the wholesome discipline of the stick, Youssuf confessed that he had stolen the sword from Kasem’s room while the latter was in attendance on the Pasha. The diamonds were immediately recovered and re-

placed. On the fourth evening, the sword was sent up into the harem by the chief eunuch, with the following note :—

‘HONOURED AND RESPECTED LORD, — The sword was stolen by the slave Youssuf while Kasem was waiting in your presence. This from your faithful and devoted  
HASSAN.’

Deli Pasha had read this note aloud. When he had finished it, Amina sprung up, and saying—

‘Allah be praised !’ burst into tears of joy.

‘Whence this strong emotion ?’ said he, surprised at her feeling so much interest in the subject.

‘Because,’ she replied, while blushes mantled over her face and neck ; ‘because I knew how much you valued that sword.’

Oh, you little hypocrite, Amina !

## CHAPTER V.

DELI PASHA OBTAINS A VICTORY OVER HIMSELF—HIS  
DAHABIÀHS GO UP THE NILE, AND IT IS SHOWN THAT  
COLD WATER DOES NOT ALWAYS EXTINGUISH A FIRE.

DELI PASHA recovered slowly, and for several days never left his harem; something seemed to weigh upon his mind, and all Amina's caresses and endearments were unable to restore his usual spirits. She could not understand the cause of this melancholy, for his lost sword had been recovered, the young Mameluke Kasem had been liberated by his order, and Mohammed Ali had shown his regard for him, and his appreciation of the Arab mare Nebleh, by sending an officer specially to inquire after his health, and to present him with a diamond ring on the part of his Highness, accompanied by a handsome sword for Ahmed Aga, and a Cashmere shawl for Hassan.

By dint of coaxing, she at length elicited from him that his proud spirit was chafing at the humiliation to which he had been exposed by the outbreak of his ungovernable temper before



all his household, and that exposure he still most unjustly laid to the account of Hassan.

‘Oh, my father,’ she said, as she sat at his feet, while his hand unconsciously played with the dark, redundant tresses that fell over her shoulders, ‘now that anger and illness have passed away, and that your good health and judgment are returning, do you not see that what Hassan did was done in fidelity and true service to you? Had he not spoken then, and stayed you in a moment when wrath had clouded your reason, the poor Mameluke would have been beaten nearly to death for a fault of which he was innocent. What would then have been said of my father’s justice and humanity? and now that all has terminated so happily, ought you not rather to thank Hassan than to blame him?’

‘I will thank him,’ said her father, ‘for you speak truly, he deserves it; but methinks you plead his cause with great earnestness, Amina.’ As he said these last words he looked fixedly at his daughter, who cast down her eyes, deeply blushing.

‘My father,’ she replied, timidly, and with suppressed emotion, ‘you know our proverb, *‘El-rghàib ma lehu nàib*’ (the absent has no advocate), and I have often heard from you that it

is right to defend those who are absent, and who are unjustly blamed; you have yourself spoken to me of the zeal, the courage, and good qualities of this Hassan, and I therefore felt sure that it was from his devotion to you, and not from insolence, that he, and he alone, spoke to you at a moment when your mind was not your own, and thus prevented you from doing that which would have cost you after-pain, in the experience of our saying, ‘Precipitation is from Satan, but patience is the key of contentment.’ You are not angry with me, are you, father?’

‘Who could be angry with you, light of my eyes and treasure of my heart?’ exclaimed the old Pasha, kissing her forehead. ‘No, my child, yet you know not what sufferings my mind has undergone; when one of those fits of fury is upon me, if any one opposes or remonstrates with me, I become mad. Hassan’s speech, though true, drove me to the extreme of madness and to the verge of murder.’ Here his voice became husky with emotion. ‘Yes, Amina, I rushed at him with a drawn dagger; he never stirred, but opened his breast to me. I was in the act of striking, when I met his large dark eye fixed upon me, not in fear, not in anger, but in love—yes, Amina, it was a look he might have fixed

upon his mother, if he had one, poor youth! It conquered me!—for the last thing that I remember was, that I passed the weapon purposely beyond his shoulder; but how he must hate—how he must despise me now!’

Amina’s tears now gushed from between the fair fingers that vainly strove to hide them. That her father should have been on the verge of murdering the idol of her heart—that he, in the pride of youth and strength, should have bared his breast to the dagger, rather than raise an arm against her father;—these thoughts produced contending emotions of horror and tenderness sufficient to overpower her self-control, and she wept without restraint or interruption, for Delì Pasha himself was much overcome by the feelings which he had just expressed.

At length she looked up, smiling through her tears, and said, ‘Father, if he is brave and generous as you say, he will not hate you. Tell him frankly the truth—that in a moment when your mind was overclouded by anger you did him injustice, and the end will be that he will love you, and you will love him, better than before.’

‘Inshallah! dear little prophetess, it shall be as you say, and, Inshallah! this shall have been the last time that men shall say of Delì Pasha

that his passion blinded his eyes and overcame his reason.'

And here we may add, that the future confirmed the strength of his resolution. The mental shock which had followed this last outbreak was never forgotten; and when, a few days later, he left the harem, his first act was to send for Hassan, and to make the frank *amende* suggested by Amina. He read in the young man's glowing eyes, as he kissed his lord's hand with an eagerness and devotion such as he had never before exhibited, the truth of her prophecy, that he should find himself not hated or despised, but better loved than ever.

Little Kasem was again reinstated in favour, and it need not be said that his gratitude to Hassan was unbounded; neither will it excite surprise that the influence of the latter in the household had been much increased by the scene which they had so lately witnessed; for never before had they seen any one venture, much less successfully venture, to brave the wrath of their proverbially irascible chief.

Hassan spent the few days which yet remained before the migration of the whole family to Siout in making the few arrangements which he had for some time proposed. He sent off the eight

horses taken from the Sammalous, with a respectfully affectionate letter to his foster-father, accompanied by fitting presents to his foster-mother and sister; he wrote also a long and grateful letter to his former patron, the Hadji Ismael, in Alexandria, and another to his old friend the chief clerk. These duties performed, he went with Ahmed Aga to the village in Kaliounbiah, armed with the Pasha's authority to appoint another Nazir and Sheik-el-Beled in the place of the two scoundrels who had been detected and dismissed. When they had made the best selection in their power, and arranged the village accounts, they turned their horses' heads again towards Cairo, Ahmed Aga saying, as they mounted—

‘I suppose now we have made two more rogues, for the saying in the country is, ‘If you want to find a match for the Priest and the Cádi, you must go to the Nazir and the Sheik-el-Beled.’’

‘I am glad that they omitted the khaznadar in the proverb,’ said Hassan, laughing.

‘The khaznadar and the mirakhor,’ replied his friend, ‘are bad enough in general, but, as the Arabs say, they are ‘tied by a shorter rope,’ and cannot eat so much of their neighbour's corn.’

It was during the long ride from the village

back to the city that Hassan related, in confidence to his friend, some of the details of his early life ; the strange name that he had borne in his youth, and the mystery in which his birth was still involved.

‘It is very strange,’ said Ahmed, who had mused in silence for many minutes after Hassan had finished his narrative ; ‘I have lived in Cairo now many years, and have known or heard the history of many families, high and low, yet I cannot recal any occurrence similar to what you relate ; neither can I understand how it has come to pass that neither of your parents have ever made inquiries after you among the Arabs in the neighbourhood.’

‘That is easily explained,’ said Hassan. ‘My father, who was probably a soldier, may have been killed in battle, and my mother may never have seen him since he carried me off an infant, probably to save my life ; if so, she may never have heard of my having been given into the charge of a Bedouin woman.’

Hassan spoke these words in a tone so sad, that to cheer him his friend replied, ‘Inshallah ! this knot will one day be untied by the Revealer of Secrets,\* whatever be the secret. I will swear

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\* One of the ninety-nine names of God among the Arabs.

by my life that your father was a brave man, and your mother a good woman; for you know the proverb—‘Grapes are not borne by the thistle-bush.’ Meanwhile, you must comfort yourself by remembering the saying of the Persian Sheikh, (Sâdi)—‘On the Day of Judgment Allah will not ask you who was your father, but who are you, and what deeds have you done.’

Conversing on this and other topics, the friends concluded their journey, and were just re-entering Boulak about sunset, when, in passing a narrow by-street, at right angles to that in which they were riding, Hassan saw at a little distance a figure in which, by the dress and gait, he at once recognised the old woman who had inveigled him into the house of the Khanum. Springing off his horse, and giving it over to the sàis, he requested Ahmed Aga to continue his way homeward with the servants, promising to rejoin him shortly. Following the old woman until she reached a part of the street where not a passenger was to be seen, he quickened his step, and, overtaking her, seized her by the arm, and said to her in a stern voice—

‘Mother of evil, tell me at once who urged you to take me to that house?’

The crone, trusting to the concealment of her

thick veil, endeavoured at first to persuade him that he was mistaken in the person whom he addressed, but her voice only made him more sure than he had been before; then she tried sundry kinds of subterfuges and falsehoods, until his patience being exhausted, he exclaimed—

‘Wallah! unless you tell me the truth, and that instantly, I will drag you straight to the Kiahia Pasha, and tell your story to him; you well know that in a few hours you will find yourself at the bottom of the Nile.’

Under the terror of this threat she confessed that it was by Ferraj, the servant of Osman Bey, that she had been induced to address him, and to introduce him to the house in question.

‘Osman Bey!’ said Hassan, bitterly. ‘Well, I am his debtor; meanwhile do you, if you value your life, hold your peace and begone. I owe you no ill will. Wretched instrument of malice,’ he muttered to himself, as he strode homeward, ‘thou art beneath my notice. What says our proverb—‘The anger of the arrow-stricken man is kindled not against the bow, but against the archer.’ Osman Bey, we shall meet again, and, Inshallah! with some weapon in our hands better than a jereed.’

Little did Hassan know, when he breathed this



wish, how soon it would be realized, and what an influence that meeting would have on his after destinies. When we see in life how often the blessings that we pray for become, when granted, sources of misfortune, and the events which we dread and deprecate result in our happiness, it seems an act of folly, if not of impiety, to pray for earthly goods in any other form than that of ‘Not my will, but thine be done.’

Most of our *dramatis personæ* are now to be separated for a season. The Thorpe family having finished their examination of the Pyramids had already re-embarked on the Nile for Upper Egypt, and Delì Pasha’s preparations for the journey to Siout were just completed after the following fashion :—

He himself with his official secretary, pipe-bearers, and the greater part of his household were embarked on board of a large dahabiàh ; a second of similar dimensions, the cabin-windows of which were provided with damask curtains within and Venetian blinds without, was allotted to his harem, with their eunuch attendants, and was ordered to remain always immediately in the wake of the first, while Hassan and Ahmed, with a score of armed followers, were to perform the journey along the banks of the river on horse-

back, and to bivouack as a guard every night at whatever place the boats might be made fast at sunset.\*

All was ready for departure, and the harem was already embarked, when an officer from the Viceroy came to Delì Pasha, and told him that his Highness wished him to remain a few days to attend a council on some matters of importance. 'He knows,' added the officer, 'that you are on the point of departure, and part of your family already embarked, wherefore he desires that you will not take the trouble to detain them, but let them go leisurely on their journey, retaining only two or three servants to attend upon you. When the council is over, his Highness will give you a swift canjah of his own, which will bring you to Siout as soon as your large heavy dahabiàhs.'

'On my head be it,' replied Delì Pasha. And having retained only a few Mamelukes for the

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\* On account of the strong currents and numerous shoals and mud-banks that occur in the Nile, it is usual to fasten the boats to the banks at sunset, and pursue the navigation at daybreak. During the night a certain number of guards or watchmen are hired from the nearest village, and while they watch (or sleep, as it may be) on the banks near the dahabiàh, its owners and their property are usually secure from robbery.

service of his wardrobe and chibouq, he desired his own boats to go forward, as originally designed, placing the Kateb-es-serr, or chief secretary (a quiet, respectable, and elderly Turk), in charge of the leading dahabiàh, and in command of those whom she contained. To Ahmed Aga and Hassan he said, 'I know that I can trust my boats and harem to your vigilance at night; there are many thieves in Upper Egypt, so you must not indulge in more than a hare's sleep.'\*

Under these instructions the dahabiàhs started on their voyage northward, and pursued it without accident or interruption until they reached a point of the river, not more than twenty miles below Siout, the place of their destination. Night was coming on, a strong gale of wind from the eastward had set in, which, in spite of all the exertions of the pilots and sailors, drove the dahabiàhs against the west bank of the Nile, where the current was running with terrific violence, and the waves dashed over the low sides of the boats.

Fearful of being carried down by the stream,

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\* This phrase is rather Persian than Turkish, and arises not only from the fine sense of hearing supposed to be conferred by the long ears of the hare, but also from a popular belief that even when asleep pussy has one eye open.

the ràises ordered the men to jump out ashore, and make fast the boats with the anchors, and also by ropes passed round sharp staves driven into the ground. With the leading boat the manœuvre succeeded, and she was brought to in a bight of the bank, where she was in comparatively smooth and sheltered water; but the boat containing the harem, less fortunate, broke from her moorings, and in spite of all the exertions of her crew hauling on her from the shore, she was carried some way along the rough and jagged bank, thereby scraping off her cabin paint, and terrifying the timid inmates.

Suddenly she came against some broken timbers of an old disused saklah or water-wheel, which smashed in all the cabin windows on the land side, shivering in pieces the Venetian blinds, and tearing the damask curtains in shreds. Immediately all was panic on board the boat, and the affrighted eunuchs and women, thinking that the cabin would be flooded, rushed on to the upper deck, which was now entirely deserted by the crew, who were busily employed forward in endeavouring to bring the boat to. All were pulling, and hauling, and shouting, and ordering; but no one was listening or obeying; the consequence, as might be expected, was

that their exertions, without direction or unity, were fruitless, and the boat continued to drift down, still grating her sides against the high and jagged bank.

Among the affrighted females assembled on what we may call the poop, Amina and her faithful Fatimeh had withdrawn quite to the stern of the boat, the place usually occupied by the steersman, where the former sat herself down on a hencoop, and looked out in terror on the dark and turbid waters, when suddenly the tiller, which had been left unsecured, swept across the deck with such force that it threw Amina and her hencoop overboard, at the same time knocking down and stunning Fatimeh Khanum, who fell against the low railing that surrounds the poop.

It happened at this time that Hassan and Ahmed Aga were some hundred yards astern of the boats, followed by their own men and by a dozen fellahs, whom they had brought from the nearest village as night watchers. Hearing the shouts and cries ahead, they conjectured that some accident had happened, though they could not see any distant object, as the dusk of evening was darkened by a gloomy sky and the dust borne on the wings of the angry blast. Suddenly a faint

cry from the water reached the ear of Hassan, and turning his eyes quickly in the direction whence it came, he descried, or thought he descried, something like drapery hurried along by the current about fifty yards from the shore.

Quick as thought he sprung from his horse, cast his cloak on the ground, threw his pistols on it, and crying to Ahmed—‘Wallah! there is a woman or child drowning,’ he plunged head foremost into the dark and boiling waters.

Ahmed Aga, who had seen no object in the water and heard no cry, thought that his young friend must be mad. Nevertheless, he could not help admiring the daring gallantry which prompted him to brave the roaring rushing waters on such a night with the hope of rescuing a fellow-creature; but he had no time left for musing, for the cries and shouts continued to rise from the dahabiàh, and his duty bid him hasten thither without delay.

Ordering one of his men to secure Hassan’s horse, cloak, and pistols, he hastened forward, and by the aid of his own presence of mind, and the force that he brought with him, succeeded at last in securing the dahabiàh to the bank. It was not until order was somewhat restored, and the eunuchs went up on the poop to reconduct

the ladies and female slaves to the cabin, that they found Fatimeh Khanum lying half-stunned, and her head still confused by the blow from the tiller. Amina was nowhere to be found—the cries and confusion thence ensuing can be more easily imagined than described.

But to return to Hassan. No sooner did he rise to the surface from his plunge than he swam down the stream with all his might, looking on both sides, and calling aloud as he went. For some time his humane endeavours met with no success; but at length, in answer to his call, a faint cry again caught his ear. Striking out in that direction, he soon came up with a hencoop, made of palm-sticks, and over it he could distinguish female drapery.

‘Take courage!—take courage! I am here to help,’ he shouted aloud; and as he neared the hencoop, his own name, faintly uttered, caught his ear.

Who can paint the tumultuous rush of feelings that agitated his breast, as he recognised the voice of his idolized Amina—feelings compared to the moral force and impetuosity of which the rushing and turbid waters of the Nile were calm as a mill-pond. Terror, pity, joy, love,—all were poured into the thrilling tone in which

he called aloud her name. 'Fear not, my beloved,' he continued, 'you are now safe. Your arm thus over the hencoop; your chin resting on your arm—thus, my love. Hold fast to it, and do not speak; but keep your sweet mouth shut, or these rough and angry waters might choke you. Thus, my love; my arm is close to you, so you have nothing to fear; I will guide the hencoop towards the bank.'

The tender and cheering tone in which he spoke, as he swam beside her giving her these instructions, placing her hand himself on the centre and most buoyant part of the hencoop, inspired the courageous girl with hope and confidence. Hitherto she had clung to her frail cage-support with the grasp of despair, and more than once the cold and the water, that had forced its way into her lips, eyes, and nostrils, had almost compelled her to let go her hold. But now she felt herself possessed, as it were, of new life; and such was her confidence in Hassan's skill, courage, and devotion, she felt that with him beside her, whether in mid-ocean or mid-desert, she could know no fear. At the worst, to die in his arms would be bliss far beyond life without him. She now proved her own high courage by obeying implicitly his directions without uttering a word.



Hassan had noted in his evening ride that for some miles below, the bank which he had left was high and precipitous ; he well knew, therefore, that the opposite bank would be shelving, and the current less strong.\* This consideration compelled him to push the hencoop before him to the opposite bank, the first object being to get Amina out of the water as soon as possible. This he accordingly did, though much to her surprise he kept talking loudly all the time, splashing and making as much noise as he could with hands and feet.†

In this way he succeeded in bringing his fair charge safely ashore ; and just opposite the point where he landed he descried a faintly-glimmering light, like that of a nearly extinguished fire. His first care was to wring the water from her drenched clothes ; and then casting off his own jacket, and wringing it in a similar manner, he threw it over her shoulders, to shelter her from the cold and biting wind.

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\* In the Nile, as in most alluvial rivers, the strongest currents are always under the high and precipitous bank ; and it often happens that for several miles successively the strongest swimmer could not land on that side.

† Hassan's object in this probably was to frighten away any crocodiles which might be near.

Seeing that she was too much exhausted to walk, he lifted her gently in his arms, and carried her towards the dim light which he had before observed. On reaching it, he found that it proceeded from the dying embers of a fire which had been made in front of a small hut such as are often constructed in Egypt by shepherds or fishermen for temporary shelter. On entering it, he found it unoccupied, though he surmised that the tenant, whoever he might be, could not be far distant, as he perceived in one corner of it a striped blanket (such as is used by the fellahs in winter), and on it the owner's naboot or cudgel.

‘El-hamdu-lillah!—Praise to Allah!’ said he, as he possessed himself of these invaluable treasures, and in another moment he had wrapped Amina from head to foot in the blanket, and laid her gently in the corner of the hut. It was not till then that he ventured to ask her how she felt.

‘Faint and very cold, dear Hassan,’ was the gently murmured reply; for, notwithstanding her delicate nurture, the brave girl’s spirit had sustained her so long as the danger endured; but now the reaction had come, and with it exhaustion, which seemed to deprive her for the time of all bodily and mental energy.

‘Patience,’ whispered Hassan, ‘this blanket

will soon make you warm; meantime I will see if there be wood or dry weeds to restore this dead fire.'

With this view, and with the naboot in hand, he went round and round the hut, but his search was fruitless. He lay down, and putting his ear to the ground thought he could distinguish some sound; he then crept quietly up to the top of a bank at some distance from the water, and from this he could descry, about a mile inland, a large fire and some tents.

'Dry clothes and some warm drink she must have,' he said to himself, 'and there is no time to lose. I know not what men these may be, but the risk must be incurred.' Here he felt his girdle, and to his great joy found that his dagger was safe in its place; he then returned to the hut, and gently asked Amina if she felt herself sufficiently recovered to go to some tents and a fire not far off.

'Oh, let me die here,' she murmured; 'you have saved me from those cold and rushing waters; let me go to sleep here, Hassan, while you sing to me. Sleep, sleep, sleep—oh, how sweet.'

Hassan saw that her mind was still overpowered by exhaustion, but he so much feared the effect of

the wet clothing on her delicately nurtured frame that he bent all his energies to reaching the fire with as little delay as possible.

‘Light of my eyes!’ he said, sitting down beside her, ‘Hassan lives only to serve you, and were it safe to yourself I would sing you to sleep, and watch at your door while you rest, but danger and pain would follow, unless you can reach the warmth of the fire.’

‘Where is the fire?’ said Amina, trying to turn herself, and to shake off the lethargy that threatened to overpower all her faculties.

‘It is not far,’ he replied; ‘if you will come, I will soon carry you there, and you can sleep as you go.’

‘I will do whatever you say,’ murmured the exhausted girl, whose ideas were still so confused that she knew not what she said. ‘Let us go to Boulak, and there you shall sing to me, and I will not tell anybody except Fatimeh how I love you; but do not let us go into that cold water again.’

Sweet to Hassan’s ear were some of these words, though spoken in half unconsciousness; but his first thought now being to convey Amina to the fire, he grasped the naboot in his hand, and carefully wrapping the blanket around her, so that

nothing but her face was exposed to the night-air, he lifted her gently in his arms, and bore her towards the cheering blaze.

The motion, together with the warmth of the blanket, restored her scattered senses, and also the circulation of her young blood, which had been chilled by long immersion in the water. Who shall tell what were now her sensations as she found herself thus tenderly borne along by her devoted lover, like an infant in the arms of its mother? or what were those of Hassan when, from the position of her head, he felt her warm breath upon his glowing cheek? Did her lips ever accidentally touch it, owing to the unevenness of the path?—did he whisper to her, ever and anon, words of comfort in a tone that told her more plainly than a declaration how deeply she was loved?—and were her soft and gentle replies, murmured in his ear, such as to make his heart throb and bound within him? To these questions we cannot give a categorical answer; all that we know for certain is, that when Hassan arrived within three or four hundred yards of the fire, he could perceive that it was in the midst of an Arab encampment, containing at least a dozen tents.

As he had now passed over the tract near the river, which was overgrown with khalfah (brush-

wood and rushes), and had reached an open tract of smooth ground, he knew that his approach would, ere long, be descried, and rightly judged that to prevent being mistaken for a lurking enemy, his wisest course would be to make it known by calling aloud. Having gently lowered Amina's feet to the ground, and in reply to his inquiry, having ascertained that she was sufficiently recovered to walk, he re-adjusted the blanket so as to cover her head and leave her the use of her feet.

‘Honoured and beloved, light of my eyes,’ he whispered, ‘Allah knows whether we shall find friends or enemies in these Arabs; at all events, their watch-dogs are likely to be troublesome. I will try to move these men by words of friendship, but if they prove thieves and treacherous, we must trust to Allah. Do you remain close behind me, and leave me the free use of my arms.’ (As he said this, he grasped the cudgel in his right and his dagger in the left hand.) ‘Before they shall offer you insult or injury, they must tear me limb from limb,’ he added. ‘It will perhaps be safer and better if among these people you pass for my——sister.’

A blush came over her face, for she knew that another and dearer name had rushed to his lips and been checked in utterance.

‘Oh, Hassan,’ she said, looking up into his eyes with the full confidence of a first and guileless affection, ‘to you I owe my life and all that makes life dear; how then can I refuse to do your bidding? for I swear by the memory of my sainted mother, on whose ashes be peace, that never did sister love a brother as——’ here she hesitated, fearful that she had said too much. How she would have finished the sentence we know not, for Hassan stooping fondly over the sweet upturned face, now lighted by a moonbeam that struggled through the angry, flitting clouds, caught on his trembling lips the murmured confession that was denied to his ear. It was the first kiss of mutual love, and in it wet, and cold, and danger were awhile forgotten. Gently withdrawing herself from his fond embrace, she added, ‘Oh, Hassan, in dealing with the people of these tents, be they bad or good, curb your daring courage, and be cautious of your life for my sake.’

‘Blessed treasure of my heart, I will do as you desire; I will be patient and gentle as a lamb with them unless they offer you insult, and then——; but no, if they are Arabs\* they will respect the law of hospitality.’

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\* In Hassan’s mouth the word Arab signified Bedouins; for he would not apply that honourable name to Fellahs, or the dwellers in villages.

So saying, he advanced from the shade of the copse directly towards the tents. Scarcely had they proceeded one hundred yards when, as he had expected, the watch-dogs began to bark, and two or three dusky figures were seen to move about near the fire; continuing his progress steadily until he came within hail, he shouted aloud at the full pitch of his powerful voice—

‘Brother Arabs, strangers in distress demand hospitality.’

The encampment was now all astir; dogs rushed out, followed by their masters armed with spears. Hassan again repeated the same shout, and the men were seen driving back the dogs and advancing to meet him. To the first who came up he said—

‘Brothers, we have seen trouble; my sister has fallen into the Nile and is half perished with cold—if you have a sheik or chief, bring me before him.’

With the brief reply of ‘You are welcome,’ they conducted him and his timid companion to the largest tent of the encampment, before which the well-fed fire was blazing; the owner came forth to meet his guest, when, at the same instant, the words ‘Abou-Hamedi,’ and ‘Hassan,’ broke from their respective lips. It was indeed our



old acquaintance the Damanhour Arab, formerly rescued by Hassan, on whose encampment he had thus unexpectedly fallen, and, to the astonishment of Amina, the Arab's wife and sister rushed out of their tent and crowded round her lover, kissing his hand, and calling him brother and preserver.

A few words sufficed to explain the condition of Hassan and Amina, and in a few minutes the latter was in the recesses of the harem-tent, covered with dry clothes, rubbed until she was in a glow of warmth, and drinking a bowl of hot fresh milk sweetened with honey. Hassan fared no less hospitably with his host, and in a short time they were relating to each other their adventures over a pipe and coffee.

## CHAPTER VI.

HASSAN AND AMINA RETURN TO THE DAHABIÀHS—ARRIVAL AT SIOUT—A ROMEO AND JULIET SCENE, AND ITS RESULTS.

WE left our hero warming himself by the fire, and exchanging a recital of adventures with Abou-Hamedi; those of the latter were not of a character to raise him in the estimation of the citizens of a civilized state, although they were far from being degrading in the eyes of an Arab. The truth is, he had become a leading member of a band of freebooters who had lately exercised their vocation with no little success in the province of Siout and its neighbourhood.

They were mostly Arabs from the interior of the Tunis and Tripoli deserts, who, having performed the pilgrimage to Mecca by way of Keneh and Cosseir, left the caravan on its return, and levied black-mail on the villages of the left banks of the river in Upper Egypt. In order to avoid suspicion, Abou-Hamedi had located his family and a few others of the Gemàat tribe who had accompanied him from Damanhour, on the spot where they were now encamped, on the right or eastern

bank of the river, where they cultivated a small tract of ground, and passed for industrious, inoffensive people, as indeed they were, with the exception of Abou-Hamedî himself, whose notions of *meum* and *tuum* were somewhat indistinct, and who had 'exchanged horses,' as he termed it, with a rich merchant of Siout. This exchange had been effected by the simple presentation of a pistol at the head of the latter, in an unfrequented spot; and although Abou-Hamedî had obtained a fleet and powerful horse in exchange for a sorry, broken-down nag, he was so dissatisfied with the bargain, that he had politely compelled the Siout merchant to throw in his purse as compensation.

All this he detailed with imperturbable gravity to Hassan, adding, that he and his companions always carried on their plundering expeditions on the other side of the river, so that his encampment was undisturbed and unsuspected. The band met at certain intervals and by preconcerted signals; when he joined them it was by night; and among his talents one of the most remarkable was his power of disguising himself in such a manner that the roving freebooter of the left bank and the peaceable fellah of the right were never suspected to be one and the same person.

Hassan was much amused by his adventures, and was pleased to find that in the rough breast of his lawless host there existed towards himself a feeling of gratitude and devotion that he had not expected to find; the latter even pulled a leathern purse from his girdle, and proposed to repay a portion of the money advanced by Hassan for his liberation; but to this he would not consent, saying, with a smile, ‘Not now, my brother; I promised you that when I required it I would ask you for it. You have a family, and I have none; keep the money, therefore, until I ask you for it. Let us now talk of other things. Do you know whose are those two boats which lately passed?’

‘Well do I know,’ replied the Arab. ‘They are the Dahabiàhs of the new Governor of Siout, Delì Pasha.’

‘True,’ replied Hassan, ‘and I am in his service. My sister, now in your tents, is in the Pasha’s harem; she fell overboard in the storm, and they must think her drowned. As they must all be now searching, and weeping and wailing, is it possible to convey her to the dahabiàh to-night, or must I go to inform them of her being safe here?’

‘It is quite possible,’ said Abou-Hamedi, ‘if

she be not too feeble and tired from having been so long in the water ; we have several donkeys here with saddles, and there is a good path to the ferry just above the place where the boats are made fast for the night.'

By Hassan's desire, the Arab's wife was then called, and desired to inquire whether Amina felt herself sufficiently recovered to ride to the ferry ; and an affirmative answer being eagerly returned, the donkeys were soon caught and saddled, and the party ready for departure.

'I will not go with you myself,' said Abou-Hamedi, aside to Hassan. 'It is better that none of the Governor's people should see my face.'

'I understand,' replied Hassan, laughing ; 'and if I meet you in Siout, I will take care not to know you ; but as my sister is young, and unaccustomed to the presence of men, I wish you could let one of your harem go with her to the boats.'

The wife and sister of Abou-Hamedi had anticipated the wish. No service that they could render seemed to them sufficient to repay their obligation to Hassan ; and the extraordinary beauty of Amina, together with the gentle gratitude which she had shown for their attentions,

had so won their affections, that they determined not to leave her until they had seen her safely deposited in the harem of her relatives. They now appeared at the door of their tent, ready for their night journey, Amina being clad from head to foot in the warmest clothes they possessed, her own wet suit being wrapped in a bundle, and entrusted to one of the three young Arabs selected to guide the party to the ferry, while one ran on before, to rouse up the ferryman and to get ready his boat. The easiest-paced donkey was assigned to Amina, and Hassan walked beside her, his arm ever ready to support her in case of the animal stumbling over the dimly seen bushes or earth-clods that might obstruct the path.

What a delicious hour was that for the lovers. Amina, now warmly clad and free from all alarm, recalled to mind the brief and thrilling moments in which she had exchanged with Hassan the confession of their mutual passion, and as they now spoke together in Turkish, which none of the party but themselves understood, they renewed the same sweet confession in a thousand forms of tenderness, such as love alone can invent, and in which love alone finds no satiety.

‘I am very jealous,’ said Amina, while the little

hand that trustfully reposed in his belied her words. 'Do you know, Hassan, that these Arab women, both of whom are young, and one of them very comely, have done nothing but talk to me of my brother's amiability and generosity. They say that their service, their lives, all that they have, are at your disposal. When and how did you steal away their hearts, Hassan?'

'Perhaps they told you,' he replied, 'of a service which I once rendered to the family, and their gratitude overrates its extent. They have kind hearts, I believe, and this is the custom of kind hearts. Look now at yourself, sweet light of my eyes; you have filled my lonely heart with a joy it never knew before—you have quenched its burning thirst; from the Keswer of your love you have turned the night of my destiny into the sunshine of noon; you have bestowed on an humble aga, of unknown birth, who has nought but his truth and his sword, a treasure which the highest and the wealthiest in the land would be proud to solicit; and yet it is scarce an hour since you, teller of sweet untruths, said that you were my debtor.'

'Is life and all that makes it dear no debt, Hassan?' replied Amina.

'If you will have it so,' said Hassan, smiling,

‘you shall be my debtor, as the earth is debtor to the showery cloud, and repays it with a thousand fruits and flowers delicious to the taste. Yet, sweet light of my eyes, forget not that again our separation is at hand: at Siout you will be shut up in the harem, offers of marriage from the great and the rich will be made to your father, he will urge you to consent—how can you resist his will?’

‘Hassan,’ replied Amina, with a firmness and solemnity of which he had scarcely thought her capable, ‘I love my father, and it would grieve me to disobey him, but Allah is greater than he. I have sworn, and I repeat the vow, by your mother’s head, that neither force nor entreaty shall induce me to marry another. If destiny forbids our union, I can die.’

‘Allah forbid!’ said Hassan, pressing her hand to his lips. ‘Destiny will not be so cruel. But tell me, as it seems to me necessary to my life that I should sometimes see your blessed face, even if it be for a moment and afar off, tell me, do you know the cry of the wit-wat?’\*

‘I believe not,’ said Amina, laughing. ‘Why do you ask?’

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\* The wit-wat is the Arabic name for a kind of curlew very common in Egypt.



Turning aside his head for a moment, he imitated the cry of the bird so exactly that the most experienced fowler would have thought that a curlew had just passed by.

‘Be it my task,’ he said, ‘to find out the window of your apartment. When you hear that cry after sunset you will know that your ‘wit-wat’ is watching below it for a glance from those loved eyes, or a word from that tongue which is more musical than the bird of a thousand songs.’\*

Thus discoursing they reached the ferry, and crossed it without accident. On approaching the spot on the opposite bank where the dahabiâhs had come-to for the night, they could see by the number of moving lights and figures on the bank that all the party was still astir, and in unwonted agitation. One of the Arab youths, who had accompanied our hero and his fair charge, ran forward at full speed until he reached the boats, where he shouted at the top of his voice—‘The Khanum is safe ; Hassan has drawn her out of the river. They are coming.’

The news spread with the rapidity of lightning. Men and women, masters and servants, all crowded forward to greet the advancing party ;

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\* One of the Eastern names for the nightingale.

and Amina, on dismounting from her donkey, found herself in the arms of her beloved Fatimeh, who had been nearly deprived of reason by the supposed loss of her young mistress, whom she loved like a daughter.

The Arab women who accompanied her, and whose kind and hospitable attentions to her wants she briefly explained, were taken into the harem cabin, and so loaded with kisses, caresses, and presents, that they began to think that Amina must be a daughter of Mohammed Ali himself, that her recovery should be attended with such extraordinary and generous demonstrations ; nor were the Arabs without entertained with less hospitable warmth.

As for Hassan, the eunuchs of the harem crowded around him to kiss his hand, and the tears of some of the faithful creatures bore testimony to the attachment which they felt towards their young mistress, whose life he had saved. Neither on board nor on the bank was there any thought of sleep that night. The tale of Amina's miraculous escape was repeated from mouth to mouth, with a score of variations and exaggerations, by groups assembled around blazing fires on the bank, while interminable pipes and coffee beguiled the hours of night.

Hassan contrived ere long to withdraw from these wonder-loving circles to a spot where he was able to enjoy in quiet the hearty congratulations of Ahmed Aga, and one or two others of his intimate companions.

On the following morning the Arab party returned to their encampment, loaded with presents forced upon them by the generosity of the Pasha's *major domo* and the ladies of the harem, while the dahabiàhs pursued their course without accident or interruption to Siout.

The official residence assigned to the Governor was a large and tolerably convenient house, which had been built not many years before, by order of Ibrahim Pasha, at the northern extremity of the town. The front looked upon an open square or meidàn, where the troops were paraded, while the back, occupied by the harem, was surrounded by gardens, in which orange, lemon, and pomegranate trees flourished in considerable abundance.

Love, though proverbially blind to danger and to consequences, is quick-sighted and quick-witted too, in discovering and approaching the object of attraction. Thus, not many days had elapsed ere the cry of the wit-wat was heard under one of the windows that looked upon the garden; the

casement was cautiously half opened, and the lovers enjoyed a few moments of stolen conversation, which, for fear of being overheard, they carried on chiefly by signs and glances; or as the Arab distich has it—

‘Walls have ears, and rivals are ever on the watch.

Our tongues were silent; but our eyes mutually spoke, and were understood.’

Notwithstanding these precautions, it unfortunately happened that one evening a gardener, who had remained beyond the usual hours of labour, saw Hassan spring over the wall at the bottom of the garden. Impelled by curiosity, he watched our hero’s movements, heard his signal, and saw a window in the harem half-opened, partially disclosing a female form, to whom Hassan addressed a few words in an impassioned undertone.

No sooner was the casement reclosed, and Hassan had retired from the garden as he had entered it, than the gardener emerged from his hiding-place; and in the anticipation of a good reward, hastened to communicate what he had seen to Ferraj, the confidential servant of Osman Bey, the deputy-governor, with whom he, the gardener, happened to be acquainted.

Ferraj, whom we have already mentioned as

being the unworthy pander to his master's passions in sensuality as in revenge, and who instinctively knew the hatred which he bore to Hassan, hastened to impart to his chief the information he had received. A grim smile passed over the features of Osman Bey. He had already heard of Amina's rescue by the devoted courage of Hassan, and easily divined the object which led him to the garden. He anticipated, therefore, the double satisfaction of punishing a man whom he hated, for an infraction of the sanctity of the harem, and of wounding by publicity the tenderest feelings of Delì Pasha, whom he both feared and disliked.

'Take with you,' he said, 'three stout fellows, and conceal yourselves in the garden after sunset, according to the directions given you by the gardener; repeat this every evening until you find this insolent harem-breaker. Have with you a large cloak and some cord; while he is looking up at the window, throw the cloak over him and bind him fast, for the fellow is strong and active as a wild ox,\* and might otherwise escape.

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\* The word literally translated in the text 'wild-ox,' is the 'Bakr-el-wachsh,' a very large and powerful species of antelope found in the deserts bordering on Egypt.

When you have got him, bring him straightway before me.'

These instructions were only too punctually executed, and two or three evenings after they were issued, just as Hassan had reached the spot from which he gave his accustomed signal, and was watching for the opening of the casement, a large blanket was thrown over his head from behind; and before he could extricate his limbs from its folds, he was thrown to the ground and bound hand and foot.

In this condition he was carried before Osman Bey, who, in order to make his crime as public as possible, summoned Ahmed Aga, and all the chief officers of Delî Pasha's household, to attend the investigation.

The news spread like wildfire throughout the palace and the neighbouring houses, so that in less than an hour the Bey's divan was crowded with wondering spectators. Investigation was scarcely required, for the evidence was clear; the culprit had been taken in the forbidden precincts; the gardener swore to the fact of the casement having been twice opened, and that a female appearing there had held communication with the prisoner, while the eunuchs of the harem, when interrogated, could not deny that the casement in

question belonged to the Lady Amina's private apartment.

Osman Bey, cloaking his revengeful hatred towards Hassan under a semblance of zeal for the Pasha's honour, ordered a pair of iron manacles to be fixed on the prisoner's wrists, and then having caused the cords and blanket in which he had been bound to be removed, ordered him to stand up and state what he had to say in his defence.

Hassan, drawing himself proudly up to his full height, and darting on Osman Bey a glance of withering scorn, replied, in a loud voice, 'Delî Pasha is father of the lady and Governor of the province, for him I reserve what I have to say ; to you I shall give no reply.'

'Take him to the guard-house prison,' cried Osman Bey, in a fury ; 'we will see if that insolent tongue will not find another kind of speech to-morrow ; let four soldiers, with loaded pistols, attend him to prison and watch at the door ; if he escapes, their lives shall answer it.'

After Hassan had been removed in obedience to this order, Osman Bey remained for some time in consultation with the commander of the troops and other officers, respecting the punishment to be inflicted on Hassan. Ahmed Aga lingered

among these, and, in order to disarm the Vice-Governor's suspicions of his sentiments towards the prisoner, he was loud in his condemnation of the offence, although he took no part in the discussion that arose regarding the punishment.

Osman Aga declared that the honour of the Pasha required it to be both prompt and severe, so as to deter others from invading the sanctity of his harem, and before the consultation closed, he avowed his determination to have Hassan publicly beaten on the following morning in the open meidàn in front of the palace, and be afterwards reconveyed to prison to await Delì Pasha's arrival. Ahmed Aga, who well knew that all opposition to a decision based on motives of personal revenge and hatred would be fruitless, feigned acquiescence in its justice, and suggested to the Governor that it would be improper that the prisoner should be confined and punished in the dress of khaznadar to the Pasha; he proposed, therefore, that he should be authorized to see him deprived of his household dress and arms, and that he should be clad in a costume more befitting his disgraced position.

To this Osman Bey willingly assenting, gave an order that the prison should be opened to Ahmed Aga to allow him to make the change in



question ; but he knew so well Hassan's popularity in the Pasha's household, that he entrusted the custody of the prisoner, both in prison and at the place of punishment, solely to his own followers and to the soldiers now under his orders as Vice-Governor.

Ahmed Aga, having provided himself with a suit of clothes such as is worn by the humbler attendants of the Pasha, proceeded, in company with two of Osman Bey's followers, to the prison, and being aware that his every word and gesture would be closely watched and reported, he affected a tone of the greatest harshness in addressing the prisoner.

Hassan, to whom his secret motives were unknown, was more hurt at the conduct of his former friend than he could have been by any indignity inflicted on him by the spite of Osman Bey ; had he known Latin and history, he might have ejaculated, '*Et tu, Brute !*' but as it was, he observed a proud and haughty silence while delivering over his khaznadar dress, together with his shawl-girdle, purse, and dagger, of all of which Ahmed Aga took possession. Scanning with a rapid glance the walls and dimensions of the prison, he noticed that it was lighted only by one small aperture, so high that escape was impos-

sible ; and he had already heard the orders given to the sentries who paced before the door with loaded pistols, and who knew that their lives were made answerable for the prisoner's safety.

‘ Give him bread and water,’ said he to the guards, ‘ and let him have a light burning in the cell, it may be useful if you want to look in at any hour before morning to see what he is doing ; he is a desperate fellow ; beware, my men, that you do not let him escape.’

‘ You may trust us for that,’ they replied, gruffly, ‘ as we have no wish to take his place, or share his punishment.’

Poor Hassan made his solitary bread and water meal with the proud stoicism of a Bedouin, though his heart inwardly bled at the apparently hopeless issue of his love and the treacherous ingratitude of Ahmed Aga.

The early hours of the night had passed, and he was just about to lose a sense of his troubles and dangers in sleep, when he was aroused by seeing something drop near his feet, which had evidently been thrown in at the aperture in the wall. Reaching out his manacled hand to it, he found it to be a lump of clay, to which was attached a note containing a small file and the following words :—

‘Light of my eyes, beloved friend,—Your condition is very perilous ; all I could do I have done. Osman Aga swears you shall be publicly beaten to-morrow, and he will keep his oath. The place will be the wooden pillar in the middle of the meidàn ; if you try to escape before you reach it you will be killed, according to his orders. The cords by which they tie you will be rotten ; with the file you can cut nearly through one of the manacles near the wrist, where the cut will not be seen, and you may then break them with a sudden effort. Immediately in front of the post will sit the Bey, and behind him you will see a large clump of date trees, at the back of which is a ruined sheik’s tomb, where you will find your clothes, your arms, and your horse ready saddled ; if you have courage and fortune to reach that spot you are safe. You must turn northward behind the date trees, and I will direct the pursuit westwards toward the desert. Allah bless you. I have been obliged to seem your enemy to obtain the means of serving you, but Hassan knows the truth of this heart and hand.’

‘I should have known and trusted,’ said Hassan, pacing up and down his cell in agitation, while a generous tear started in his eye ; ‘but I

doubted thee, Ahmed, and am unworthy of thy friendship.'

After giving himself up awhile to these thoughts, he reverted to the letter. 'Beaten!' he said, while he crushed the senseless paper in his gyved hand. 'I, Hassan, the Child of the Pyramid, whose lance has emptied the saddles of warriors; I, the betrothed of Amina, to be exposed in the meidàn, and beaten like a thief or a slave—by Allah, rather will I die ten thousand deaths.' Here he drew up his towering form to its full height, while his broad and muscular chest heaved with indignant emotion. He then cast his eye scornfully down on the rusty manacles that fettered his wrists. 'Fools,' said he, 'to think that the hands of Hassan could be held by brittle toys like these! The intention of Ahmed in sending me the file was friendly, and it may yet be needed, but not now. The slaves might examine these chains before leading me out, and my escape be thus rendered impossible.'

So saying he hid the file in the folds of a linen girdle that supported his serwal (or drawers), and having carefully reperused Ahmed's letter, so as to fix it firmly in his memory, he tore it piecemeal, and buried it in the dust in a corner of his cell, so that in case he should fall in his attempted

escape there might not be found on his person anything to compromise his friend.

Having made these preparations, and recited his evening prayer, he lay down and slept soundly till he was awakened by the drawing of the bolts of the prison door, and the entrance of half a dozen armed men, appointed to conduct him to the place of punishment.

In obedience to their orders, before leaving the prison they examined the manacles, which Hassan held up to their inspection with an air of good-humoured confidence, which, together with his noble and distinguished mien, impressed those rough fellows in his favour.

They were strangers to him personally, but they thought it a pity that so handsome a youth should be subjected to a degrading punishment for speaking a few words in the garden beneath the window of a Khanum whose life he had saved only a few days before; however, they knew Osman Bey's character, and dared not disobey his orders, so they marched their prisoner to the appointed spot, where a man stood ready to tie his hands to the post mentioned in Ahmed's letter.

While performing this office, his back being turned to the Bey, a single wink of the eye sufficed to show to Hassan that he was a friend,

and that the cord was either half cut or rotten. Osman Bey sat on a cushioned carpet, smoking his chibouq, some of the officers of his household standing on either side, while behind him Hassan recognised many friendly faces of Delì Pasha's attendants, on which sympathy and indignation were legibly written; beyond these again he noticed the palm-grove, where his horse and liberty awaited him, if he could escape from stab or bullet on the way. The attempt seemed desperate; yet, although Hassan had resolved to risk it, none could read any agitation or emotion in that calm, proud eye, which, after surveying the surrounding crowd, rested its scornful glance on the Vice-Governor.

‘Osman Bey,’ said Hassan, in a loud, firm voice that was heard by all present, ‘I warn you to desist from this unjust punishment. I have appealed to Delì Pasha; it is he alone who should judge his own khaznadar.’

‘Dog!’ replied Osman Bey, ‘dost thou teach me my duties and my powers? Am I not Governor till Delì Pasha arrives; and shall I not punish a scoundrel who dares to invade his harem? I will have thy back beaten till thou canst not speak, and I will leave thy feet for Delì Pasha to beat till thou canst not stand.

Slaves,' he continued, addressing two men armed with sticks who had silently taken their places on each side of the prisoner, 'strike! and if you do not lay it soundly on, by my head you shall taste the stick yourselves.'

Even as he ceased speaking, the fall of a heavy blow on Hassan's back sounded over the meidàn, and an involuntary groan burst from many of his former comrades in the Pasha's household. Uttering the single word 'Allah,' in a voice of thunder, Hassan burst the cord that bound his hands to the post, and dashing them apart with the full power of his gigantic strength, the rusted manacles snapped like whipcord: a single bound brought him to the side of the astonished Bey, who had scarcely time to take the pipe from his mouth ere he received from the iron chain still hanging from Hassan's right hand a blow which broke his nose and deluged his face in blood. Without turning even to give him a look, Hassan dashed impetuously forward, brandishing a sword that he had snatched from the Bey's nearest attendant. Some made way for him apparently paralysed by fear or surprise, some doubtless from secret friendship, so that here and there parrying a random cut or thrust, he succeeded in gaining the palm-grove.

Such was his extraordinary fleetness of foot, that he had distanced all pursuers, when the Bey, rising from the ground, and holding a handkerchief to his bleeding face, roared aloud in fury to his kawâsses and Bashi-Bozouks to mount in pursuit. 'A hundred purses to any one who takes him, dead or alive !'

It may well be believed that a reward of such unheard of magnitude sent many of the greedy soldiers to their saddles with all possible speed.

Hassan, meanwhile, sped his way to the Sheik's tomb, behind which he found a friendly young Mameluke of the Pasha's, mounted and holding Shèitan by the bridle.

'Quick, quick !' said the youth ; 'here is your belt and pistols, they are primed and loaded ; here your sword and dagger ; in these small bags, firmly tied to the saddle, are your clothes and purse. Away, away to the right, round these palms ; I will gallop off to the left, and shout as if in pursuit.'

With a grasp of the hand, and without exchanging another word, Hassan fastened his arms in his girdle, and vaulting into the saddle, went off at full speed, while the young Mameluke galloped off in the opposite direction, shouting aloud, and followed, as he expected, by the first horsemen



who came up, and who, supposing him to be in sight of the fugitive, hastened in pursuit, hoping to snatch from him the coveted prize of one hundred purses.

One of the mounted kawàsses only, a powerful fellow, and greedy, like the rest, to secure the promised reward, had caught the sound of Shèitan's retreating hoofs, and followed in the right direction ; nor was it long ere, leaving the palm-grove and entering on the adjoining open fields which bordered the desert, he caught a view of Hassan in full flight before him.

Our hero, well knowing that he could trust, if necessary, to his horse's speed, did not wish to distress him at the commencement of a chase the length of which was uncertain ; he contented himself therefore with going on at a moderate hand-gallop, which soon allowed the impatient kawàss to gain on him. Hassan perceiving, as he approached, that the man had not a gun, but was armed like himself with sword and pistols, drew one of the latter from his belt, and quietly awaited his adversary's approach.

The kawàss, thirsting for the hundred purses, and trusting to his skill in the use of his weapon, galloped by our hero, discharging his pistol as he passed ; the ball whizzed by his head, but missed

its mark, while Hassan, driving the stirrup into Shèitan's flanks, brought him quickly within range of his opponent, when he fired with so true an aim that the kawàss fell dead at the first shot.

‘Fool!’ said Hassan; ‘what harm had I done you, that you must strive to take me?’

He then dismounted, and seeing that no other pursuers were in sight, he dressed himself in the kawàss's clothes, and throwing the body into an adjoining ditch, added a second brace of pistols to his own means of defence, and led off his late opponent's horse, which he resolved to retain or turn loose as circumstances might render it advisable.

## CHAPTER VII.

DELÌ PASHA ARRIVES—A STORM SUCCEEDED BY A CALM—  
HASSAN MEETS WITH AN OLD ACQUAINTANCE, AND  
ENTERS UPON A NEW CAREER.

A FEW days after the events related in the last chapter, Delì Pasha, who had been released from his attendance on the Viceroy, and had performed the voyage up the Nile in a light Government canjah, arrived at Siout, where he learnt the various ‘moving incidents’ that had occurred in his household, the imminent peril of his favourite child, rescued by the devoted courage of Hassan, her name become the subject of scandal in connexion with that of her deliverer, and the disgraceful punishment awarded to his khaznadar by Osman Bey, who, as Delì Pasha well knew, had gratified his own revengeful hatred under a semblance of zeal for the honour of his chief.

All these things combined to rouse the feelings of the choleric old soldier to the highest pitch of excitement. He was angry with Hassan, angry with his daughter, angry with Osman Bey, and angry with Destiny, which had brought all these

troubles on his old age. His attendants saw the cloud settled on his brow, and waited in silent apprehension to see when and how the storm would burst.

At last it fell, as is too often the case in this world of injustice, on the feeblest and most innocent head. Amina alone, of all the objects of his wrath, was under his roof and entirely in his power ; she had heard from Fatimeh Khanum and the eunuchs the indications of her father's gloomy state of mind, and as on arriving he had neither come to see her nor sent her any message of affection, she dreaded the first interview, and yet prepared to meet it with fortitude. When, after the lapse of some days, he visited her apartment, and ordered all the attendants to retire, she advanced to meet him, and observing no welcome sign of parental embrace, she kissed the hem of his robe, and sat down in silence at his feet.

Notwithstanding all his stoic and stern resolves, the feelings that struggled for the mastery in his breast betrayed themselves in his features ; and as he contemplated her surpassing loveliness, and the touching and subdued melancholy by which it was shaded, he could not forbear the reflection, that had it not been for the

courageous devotion of Hassan, that face and form, which he had so often caressed with all a father's love, would now be sleeping cold and lifeless in the muddy bed of the Nile.

'Better so than disgraced and dishonoured,' said he to himself, rousing his own angrier passions, and giving them vent in a volume of reproaches directed against herself and her lover. For a long time she bore them in silence and in tears, but when at length he reproached her with giving her affection to a nameless adventurer, and said that he would rather see her dead than united to one who had ungratefully brought dishonour on his house, she started to her feet, and while the eyes so lately bathed in tears now flashed with the fire of indignation, she said—

'Father, you shall have your wish. Death has no terror for me, and I would meet it in any hour and in any shape rather than renounce a faith that I have plighted in the sight of Allah. Cruel and unjust father, how dare you tax with ingratitude one who so lately risked his own life to save that of your child? Father, neither your anger nor your power can arrest the decrees of destiny. Was it Hassan's fault or was it mine, that on that dark and stormy night I was cast

into the waves of the Nile? He heard a faint cry, and, though he knew not who uttered it, he, the generous and the brave, plunged into those troubled waters, and reached me just as I was about to sink from cold and exhaustion. Cheering and sustaining me, he brought me to the shore. In the very jaws of death I vowed to devote to him the life that he had saved; he stripped off his own cloak to shield me from the cold; he bore me to the friendly Arab tents, and his heart beat against my heart as I reposed in his arms. He had seen my face uncovered, and we mutually swore to love each other faithfully, until separated by that death from which we had just escaped. Cruel father, do you think that after this any other man would wish, or dare to wed your daughter? In the sight of Allah, Hassan is my husband. The cruelty of man or Fate may doom me never to see him again; but I warn you, father, that I am Deli Pasha's own daughter, and if you compel me to become the bride of another, the bridal bed shall be the grave of one or both.'

The Pasha gazed with mingled awe and astonishment on the lofty brow, the flashing eyes, and dilated figure of his transformed Amina as she uttered these words, while one of her hands

rested on her girdle, as if seeking the hilt of that dagger to which her closing sentence had so plainly alluded.

She was, indeed, his own daughter; and now that her youth, and beauty, and truth, and a pure, deep-rooted passion thus impetuously assaulted a fortress, half of whose garrison was already inclined towards the invader, what could it do but surrender at discretion.

‘Amina,’ he said, in a voice rendered tremulous by emotion, ‘you are right—it has been the work of destiny. I meant not to be cruel to you, or unjust to Hassan. Come to my arms.’

Who has not experienced the pleasure of seeing a dusky summer cloud, which lately obscured the sun, and sent forth from its angry breast the lightning’s flash and the thunder’s growl, suddenly dissolve and pass away in gentle rain, while the sun resumes its empire over the sky, and the shower-spangled leaves, and herbs, and flowers exhale the grateful incense of their odorous breath.

Such, only so much more lovely as moral is superior to natural beauty, was the change wrought in Amina by a word and gesture of parental love. Throwing herself into his arms with a wild cry of irrepressible joy, she looked

up in his face, and pressing his hand fondly to her lips, said—

‘Father, dear father, I fear that my words have pained you; tell me that you forgive me. I can bear anything but to hear him ill-spoken of; then my heart jumps to my mouth, and my tongue knows no restraint; but now I am your own little Amina again. Kiss me, and love me, dear father, and, Inshallah! I will never do anything to offend you.’

Delì Pasha could not trust himself to speak, but he folded her to his heart in a silence more eloquent than words, and the reconciliation between father and daughter was complete.

Often afterwards, when alone together, they spoke of Hassan, and wondered what had become of him, till at length reports reached them, which, although they threw a light upon his fate, filled them at the same time with grief and dismay.

In order to explain these more fully to the reader we must resume the thread of our narrative at the point where we left our hero clad in the dress of the kawàss whom he had despoiled, and journeying northward along the border of the desert, leading his newly-acquired spare horse by the bridle.

He had travelled some four or five hours at a



round pace without halting, when he met half-a-dozen wild-looking Bedouin Arabs, well-mounted, and armed with lance and sword. Forgetting at the moment that the dress which he wore might not find favour in the eyes of these children of the Desert, he rode forward to meet them, when one who seemed their leader, after conversing for a few moments with his companions, called aloud to him :—

‘Halt, you kawàss, servant of some grasping Turk; if you would have us spare your life, dismount, and give us up those two horses.’

‘I am no kawàss,’ replied Hassan, addressing the surprised Arabs in the deep-toned guttural accents of a Bedouin, ‘but a son of the Desert, like yourselves. ’Tis but a few hours since a kawàss attacked me, and I killed him and took his horse. If you wish to fight, the same arms that killed him are ready for you. If you desire peace, Bismillah! I am your friend.’

While speaking, he deliberately drew a pistol from his girdle, and brought round the hilt of his sword ready for his hand. The Bedouins were completely puzzled by his appearance and language; his powerful figure, noble mien, and the perfect coolness with which he challenged six men to combat, compelled their involuntary

admiration, while his dress denoted hostility to their predatory band, and his horses excited their cupidity.

While they were holding a brief consultation as to the course which they should pursue, another Arab belonging to their party, who had followed them at some distance, came up ; he was a broad-shouldered, stout fellow, with a black patch covering one half of his face, and from the eagerness with which they crowded round him, it was evident that his voice was not without weight among them.

‘ Let me see this kawàss who pretends to be a Bedouin,’ said he, pushing his way through them, ‘ I will soon tell you whether he be lion or jackal.’ So saying, he advanced to within a few yards of our hero, who sat motionless as a statue.

‘ Mashallah ! Mashallah !’ exclaimed the new comer ; and, to the astonishment of his comrades, he jumped off his horse, and running up to Hassan, kissed his hand, crying aloud, ‘ Ya sidi, ya sidi — My master, my master, do you not know your faithful Abou-Hamedi ?’

It was, indeed, no less a personage than our old friend the Damanhourî whom Hassan had thus unexpectedly encountered, and who was now

out upon a marauding expedition with a fragment of the lawless and numerous band of which he was a member.

‘The black patch could not disguise Abou-Hamedi from the eyes of a friend,’ replied Hassan, cordially returning his greeting. In a few minutes hasty salutations and mutual inquiries had passed, and Hassan found himself on his way to the Bedouin encampment, where he was invited to sup and pass the night.

Abou-Hamedi took the bridle of the led horse, and treated our hero with such evident deference, that other Arabs unconsciously adopted a similar manner towards him, and he entered their encampment rather with the air of its chieftain than of a homeless fugitive.

The band consisted of forty-five or fifty men, who were sitting in a circle round a large fire, at which a couple of black slaves were roasting several sheep and baking Arab bread on the cinders; the horses were picketed in a semicircle at the back of the party, and other black slaves were bringing them their evening supply of forage; tents there were none, these hardy sons of the Desert contenting themselves with a blanket for a bed and the open sky for a canopy.

Hassan saw at a glance that more than half of

the band were Arabs from the West—rough, powerful fellows they were, who, having come across the Great Desert to perform the pilgrimage to Mecca, had on their return been attracted by the ‘flesh pots of Egypt,’ and had remained behind to do a little business in the plundering line, while the rest of their caravan had continued its course to the desert borders of Tripoli and Tunis; the residue of the party was composed of Arabs, who were either outlawed for some offence against the Egyptian Government, or had been compelled to fly from some Bedouin tribe to avoid the retaliation of a deed of blood.

Hassan had no sooner taken his seat among them than he was expected and requested to relate the circumstances which had brought him among them in the dress of a Turkish kawàss, and with iron manacles attached to each wrist. This he did in a simple and unpretending manner, which would have carried conviction with it even without the confirmatory evidence of the manacle chain which still hung from his right hand.

The Bedouins listened with grave attention and interest to his tale, and at the end of it Abou-Hamedi drew near to his side, and asking him for the file, which the forethought of Ahmed had provided, set about the task of delivering our hero

from bracelets which were neither convenient nor ornamental. This was a more tedious task than it appeared; and when at length they were removed, they were passed from hand to hand, the Arabs casting their eyes from the broken chain to the powerful limbs which it had failed to fetter, and paying that involuntary tribute to lofty stature and manly beauty which these qualities command still more in savage than in civilized life.

No sooner was Hassan relieved from his gyves than he rose up and went to see that his faithful Shèitan was duly cleaned and fed; he found a grinning negro, belonging to Abou-Hamedi, already employed on this service, whose good will he further stimulated by a smile of encouragement and a five-piaster piece slipped into his palm; the horse taken from the kawàss likewise received his due allowance, and both it and Shèitan were provided with a coarse rug to protect them against the cold of approaching night.

While Hassan was thus engaged, and in the subsequent recital of his sunset prayers, which, like a true Mussulman, he never omitted in any presence or under any circumstances, Abou-Hamedi was eloquently haranguing the listening Arabs concerning his character and qualities. He related to them how he himself owed his life and

liberty to Hassan's youthful generosity; and after extolling in the highest terms his deliverer's daring courage and aptitude for command, he proposed that the band should invite him to become their leader.

One of the party, named Abou-Hashem, who had hitherto acted in that capacity, listened to this address with a clouded brow. He was a strong, active man, well skilled in the use of his weapons, bold and resolute in danger, and well versed in the various modes of Arab warfare. He expressed his dissent from the proposal of Abou-Hamedi, and said that he, for one, would not agree to surrender his own claims to command to a stranger, and one of less age and experience than himself. Abou-Hamedi replied; and the discussion was so warmly sustained on both sides that they did not perceive the return of Hassan, who had taken his seat in the circle, and listened in silence to the concluding arguments of the disputants.

‘Let this discussion cease, my brothers,’ he said, in a voice whose deep authoritative tone commanded general attention. ‘I seek not to be your leader, and would not accept the charge otherwise than by your unanimous choice. So long as I remain among you I will be faithful to your

cause; and if I see amongst you treachery or cruelty, or aught else that I do not approve, I shall leave you, and follow my solitary path. In a band like this, where there is no hereditary title to command, the boldest heart, the strongest hand, and the wisest head must be your chief. In the first fair day of fight that we may have, show me the man who is first in the fray, stoutest in the *melée*, and last to leave it—let him be our leader, I will cheerfully follow and obey him.'

This speech was received with general acclamation. Then the party having set their guards retired to rest, and thus Hassan found himself transformed from a Turkish khaznadar into a comrade of predatory outlaws.

Not a week had passed ere Abou-Hamedi went disguised into Siout to perform various commissions, and to gather information. On his return he told his companions that after two days the great annual caravan of Gellabs (slave-dealers) was about to set out for the Soudan; that their sacks would be full of money and trinkets, for the purchase of slaves, and that they were to be escorted by fifty Bashi-Bozouks, or irregular Turkish cavalry.

He also informed them that he had seen

Osman Bey in his divan, with a large black plaister covering his broken nose and lacerated cheek, at which intelligence a smile of satisfaction played over Hassan's features, which had of late worn an unusually grave expression. It was unanimously resolved to plunder the caravan, and a council was held as to the place and plan of attack, in which Abou-Hamedi and Abou-Hashem, as being best acquainted with the localities, were the principal speakers. After the council had broken up, Abou-Hamedi retired aside with Hassan, and produced from his saddle-bags a complete Bedouin dress, which our hero gladly donned in place of the Turkish costume which he had of late been accustomed to wear.

On the day fixed for the departure of the Gellabs, our band, guided by Abou-Hamedi and Abou-Hashem was posted behind a desert sand-hill on the caravan road to the south, at a distance of about fifteen miles from Siout. Swords were loosened in their scabbards, the priming of pistols and the points of lances duly examined, and all were on the tip-toe of expectation, when towards four in the afternoon the caravan was seen slowly approaching, half of the armed escort in front, half in the rear, with the wealthy Gellabs and their baggage containing money,



jewels, trinkets, and numerous sets of manacles, in the centre.

Our Bedouins were awaiting them in profound silence, when suddenly their ambush was betrayed by one of their horses, a fiery and impatient animal, that began to neigh, snort, and execute various curvetings, which exposed his rider to the view of the leading soldiers of the escort, who seeing that the Bedouin endeavoured again to find concealment behind the sand-hill, suspected the true state of the case, and began to look to their arms and prepare for action.

‘Upon them at once,’ shouted Hassan, ‘and overthrow them before the rear-guard has time to come up to their support! Strike only the soldiers; the merchants and travellers must be ours.’

As he spoke these words he struck the stirrups in Shèitan, and charged at headlong speed the leading column. It was in vain that Abou-Hashem, jealous of his honour, strove to be first in the fray; he urged his horse with voice and stirrup, but before he came up Hassan had already emptied two troopers’ saddles, and was dealing death among their fellows, uttering terrific shouts that rose high above the din of arms and the cries of the dismayed merchants.

At first the freebooters seemed about to gain an easy victory, but the rear-guard of the escort came up, and for some time the fight was continued upon nearly equal terms. Abou-Hashem, who fought that day with a fierce emulation, was wounded in the sword arm by a pistol shot, and having been thrown from his horse, was about to be despatched by a trooper, when Hassan's sword flashed above his head, and he fell senseless beside the body of his intended victim.

To dismount from his horse and re-mount his fallen comrade was to Hassan the work of a moment, when, springing again on the back of Shèitan, he plunged into the thickest of the *melée*, and ere long the discomfited troopers were in rapid flight towards Siout.

The Bedouins not caring to pursue them, surrounded the caravan, and commenced the work of plunder and distribution of the spoil with a readiness and order which proved them to be adepts at the trade. Hassan stood at a little distance wiping his stained sword, and tying a handkerchief over a flesh wound in the arm, from which the blood had freely flowed.

The booty proved greater than the most sanguine of the Bedouins had expected, and Abou-Hashem himself proposed and demanded that the

leader's share should be set apart for Hassan. Our hero, scarcely deigning to cast a glance at the heap thus placed before him, gave his hand to his late rival, and inquired kindly after his hurt. Abou-Hashem felt that, morally and physically, he was in presence of a superior, and from that day Hassan was uncontested chief of the band.

The merchants and other trafficking members of the caravan, with their servants, sat in melancholy silence on the ground, looking on at the distribution of their goods and money among the captors.

When Hassan, at the request of Abou-Hamedi, condescended to examine the share of booty allotted to him, he found that it consisted of two black slaves, three mules, a number of jewels and trinkets, and nearly one hundred pounds in money. Of the slaves, one was a sickly-looking youth, to whom Hassan gave a piece of money, saying, 'Go where you will—you are free.'

The other was a tall, powerful fellow, with a look of pride and resolution in his eye, which pleased Hassan's taste; he was a native of Darfour, and had accompanied the caravan as an interpreter among the tribes of that region. In appearance he was more like one of the Lucumi, or other warrior tribes of South-Western Africa,

than the woolly-headed negroes usually met with in the Egyptian slave-market. At his girdle hung a short club made of the heavy iron-wood of his native land, and in his hand he carried a long stick or cane, one end of which was tipped with a kind of fibrous cover of basket work, while at the other end was an iron hook, which gave to the stick the appearance of a shepherd's crook.

'What is your name, and whence are you?' inquired Hassan.

'From Darfour, and my name Abd-hoo,' replied the black.\*

'Have you been a warrior in your own country?'

'I have seen some fighting,' said Abd-hoo with a grim smile.

'Why did you not then fight when we attacked your caravan?'

'Because that Gellab broke his faith. He promised me forty piasters a month, and has paid me only twenty. I would not move a finger to save his life.'

As he said this he pointed to one of the slave-

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\* It is probably known to most readers that nine out of ten Arabic proper names have reference to the Deity or the religion of Islam. The name Abd-hoo, literally 'His servant,' means 'the servant of God.' The pronoun 'He,' when standing apart from any person referred to in a sentence, always has reference to 'Allah.'

dealers, who was looking in mute despair on his rifled bags and boxes.

'If your muscles answer to your appearance, you should be a strong fellow,' said Hassan.

'Try me,' replied the black, thrusting out from beneath his blanket an arm that would have done credit to the champion of the fistic ring in England.

A laugh among the Bedouins followed this sally of the sturdy negro; Hassan noticed it, and simply answering, 'I will try a wrestling fall\* with you, and if you throw me you shall go free,' threw off his abah (outer Arab-scarf) and his arms; the negro followed the example, and though he was half a head short of Hassan in stature, the vast size of his bull-neck and shoulders, and the muscular development of his arms and legs created an impression among the Bedouins (none

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\* Wrestling matches (called 'Musàara' in Arabic, and 'Kushty' in Persian) are a very favourite exercise among the populations of both countries, and at them, as at the games of cricket in England, and 'curling' in Scotland, the higher and lower classes contend on a footing of equality. A highly respected and talented British minister at the Court of Tehran used frequently to 'try a fall' with some of his own servants at a gymnasium near the mission residence. We insert this note in order to prevent our readers from supposing that our hero had degraded himself by accepting the brief and unexpected challenge of the Darfour.

of whom, excepting Abou-Hamedi, had any experience of Hassan's extraordinary powers) that their newly-appointed chief would be no match for the Darfour.

When, however, they grappled, and all the sleights and desperate exertions of the negro failed to move Hassan from his firm position of defence, or even to disturb the quiet and confident smile that played upon his countenance, it soon became as evident to the bystanders as it was to Abd-hoo, that he was in the gripe of his master, and not many minutes elapsed before he measured his length upon the sand.

Hassan then resumed his abah and his arms, and continued the conversation with his defeated opponent as if nothing had occurred to interrupt it.

'Abd-hoo, you are a stout fellow, though you have yet some sleights to learn in wrestling. Canst thou be faithful?'

'Where I promise I keep my word,' said the negro.

'Enough,' replied Hassan; 'I want no slave; here is a piece of gold for you, take it; you are free to go where you will or to serve me; if you choose the latter, you shall have your share of my bread and my purse.'

'I will follow you to death,' replied Abd-hoo,

looking up to his new master with a reverence inspired by those physical powers, which, in his rude breast, afforded the highest claim to respect.

Hassan, having given into his charge the horses which had fallen to his share, cast his eyes over the disconsolate group of merchants and their followers, among whom his quick eye detected a feeble old man, whom he had more than once seen at the Governor's house at Siout. Approaching him, he inquired what had brought him on this route.

'My son is a merchant who deals in gum and senna in Soudan,' replied the old man; 'he has fallen into illness and trouble, and I was going to Dongola to see him, and to give some money to the Governor's secretary to get him released from trouble; now my fifty dollars and my mule have been taken from me, I am ruined and my son is lost.'

'I hope your case is not so bad,' said Hassan, smiling good-humouredly; 'here are one hundred dollars to make good your loss; you must now return to Siout, and, Inshallah! you will soon set out again for Soudan with a better escort and a more fortunate caravan.' He then turned to the group of Gellabs, and said in a voice that carried dismay to their already trembling hearts—

‘Hark ye, I know you all, and shall know all your doings in Siout; if ye dare to touch one para of what I have given to this old man, your lives shall answer it. Now gather up what you have left of clothes and goods and begone.’

In obedience to his orders the discomfited traders collected the goods and the sorrier nags and mules which the freebooters had left as useless to themselves, and retraced their way to Siout, while Hassan and his band went off with their booty into the desert.

The news of this audacious ‘razzia,’ exaggerated as it was by the defeated troopers and the despoiled Gellabs, created the greatest consternation in Siout. Hassan’s band was magnified into a force of two or three hundred ferocious and well-armed desperadoes, and he himself into some Jinn or Afreet in human shape, equally proof against lance, sword, or bullet.

Osman Bey was furious at this new triumph of his mortal enemy, the more so as a portion of the money captured by the Bedouins had been advanced by himself to the Gellabs on speculation.

Deli Pasha was scarcely less vexed at the lawless and desperate course of life on which his late favourite had been driven to enter, although



his former feelings towards him were kept alive by the trait of compassionate generosity which he had shown to the old man, who had himself related it to the Pasha with tears in his eyes.

Hassan's warning threats to the Gellabs had not been without effect, for none had dared to take from him a para of the hundred dollars given to him by the dreaded leader of the plundering band. The latter, ere long, acquired a notoriety equalled by that of Robin Hood in the olden time of England ; nor were Hassan's character and conduct very different from those of our prince of archers and foresters. To take from the rich and bestow generously on the poor and oppressed was the base of his system. Thus in every village he had voluntary and grateful spies, who gave him timely notice of the approach of any troops sent against him, and according to their numerical force, or his own inclination, he either defeated or eluded them.

The attention of Mohammed Ali was, ere long, aroused by the depredations of this formidable band ; but although he sent the most angry and severe orders to his provincial Governors to seize the audacious rebel who set his authority at defiance, their exertions remained infructuous.

Tales of Hassan's deeds of prowess, daring,

and generosity became current among the villagers of the whole valley of the Nile, among whom he was generally spoken of as 'Hassan eed-el-maftouha,' or 'eed-el-hadid,' that is 'Hassan of the open hand' (*i.e.* the generous), or 'Hassan of the iron hand;' and the provincial Governors were completely stupified by his apparent power of ubiquity, for no sooner did one of them send a force in pursuit of him near some village where his presence had lately been reported, than they heard of his having plundered some Sheik-el-Beled or caravan, one hundred miles off.

This latter circumstance, though devised by Hassan, was carried out by the versatile talents of Abou-Hamedi, who had secret friends and spies in most of the Nile villages. These fellows were instructed from time to time to run to the nearest town or residence of a Governor, bawling for help, and stating that they had seen Hassan and his band prowling near their village on the preceding night. Soldiers would be sent to watch for him, and then news would arrive that some depredation had been committed by his band in another province.

Meanwhile Hassan did not neglect the precaution of maintaining a good understanding with

the Bedouin tribes ; himself, totally indifferent to money, all his share of booty that he did not bestow on the poor and helpless he gave in presents to the most powerful of the Bedouin Sheiks, so that when Mohammed Ali tried to employ against Hassan his favourite method of 'setting a thief to catch a thief,' by calling upon some of the Arab chiefs to assist in apprehending our hero, they apparently obeyed the Viceroy's wishes, but it was after having sent a secret and timely notice to Hassan, and, as might be expected, their ostensible efforts were without result.

We have said that the wild and lawless career upon which our hero had entered caused deep regret to Delî Pasha, and it may be imagined that it caused the tears of his daughter to flow in secret ; neither these tears nor these regrets were much diminished by a letter which the Pasha one day received, and which was brought by a stranger, who disappeared as soon as he had delivered it. Allowing for the difference between Turkish and English idiom it ran as follows :—

*'To the High in Rank, the Honourable and Honoured  
Delî Pasha, Governor of Siout.*

'Hassan, his faithful servant, having been driven from his honourable place in his Excel-

lency's service, and having been degraded in the eyes of the household and others by the tyranny of Osman Bey, has had no other choice than to maintain his honour and life as the Chief of a Bedouin band. He may be exiled, outlawed, perhaps, if such be the will of Allah, put to death by the Egyptian Government, but no act of cowardice, treachery, or cruelty on his part shall cause his Excellency to blush for having once extended to Hassan his generous protection. His life is in the hands of Allah ; but so long as it endures, his thoughts, his hopes, his heart, and his faith are a sacrifice at the feet of Amina, and his prayers are for her and for her honoured father.'

## CHAPTER VIII.

A CHAPTER OF MOVING INCIDENTS—SUPERSTITIONS OF  
CAIRO—MRS. THORPE VISITS DELÌ PASHA'S HAREM.

NOTHING can be more dull, hot, and disagreeable than a summer in Upper Egypt; and as we fear that the description of its heat might be as intolerable to our readers as the endurance thereof is to those who are exposed to it, we will take the liberty of skipping over the six months which followed the events related in the preceding chapters, and will content ourselves with briefly mentioning the changes that took place in the destinies of our principal *dramatis personæ*.

Mr. Thorpe and all his party had gone to pass the summer among the cool breezes of the Lebanon; but as the health of his daughter caused him some inquietude, he had determined to return to Upper Egypt in the following winter, for which purpose he re-engaged the two dahbiàhs in which he had before made his voyage up the Nile.

Delì Pasha had obtained the Viceroy's permission to return with his family to Cairo, leaving

Osman Bey in charge of the government of Siout; and the latter received a significant hint from his Highness, that if he did not contrive some means of apprehending the formidable outlaw whom his ill-timed harshness had driven to revolt it might prove the worse for himself.

As for our hero and his band, the heat of summer and the cold of winter were alike to their hardy frames, and the terror of his name had spread far and wide with every succeeding month. The reports of his daring achievements excited the Viceroy's anger, sometimes mingled with admiration, sometimes with mirth, which he cared not to suppress. A brief narrative of some of these may prove not unamusing to our readers.

On one occasion Abou-Hamedi (who had received several flesh-wounds in a late encounter) went into Siout disguised as a Fellah, and rushing into the presence of Osman Bey claimed redress of his wrongs, stating that not more than five leagues from the town he had been plundered, beaten, and wounded by Hassan and a part of his band. His ghastly appearance, the blood on the bandages that bound his head and arm, the tone of helpless misery in which he told his tale, all conspired to induce the Bey to give credit to it. A surgeon was ordered to remove

the bandages, and there were the unhealed wounds to speak for themselves.

On being asked where Hassan now was, and how many of his band were with him, the pretended Fellah named the place, and said that the greater part of the band had gone elsewhere to plunder some caravan, and that Hassan had with him only six or eight of his followers.

When told that he must guide a party to the place, he evinced such a dread of Hassan, and bargained so obstinately for the amount of his reward when the formidable chief should be captured, that all doubts of the truth of his tale were removed.

Osman Bey resolved at once to whiten his face before the Viceroy by heading in person the party selected for this important service, which was to consist of twenty of the best mounted and armed of his followers, each man being provided with a coil of cord to bind the prisoners.

Without relating all the details of the expedition, it is sufficient to say that the unlucky Bey fell into an ambush laid with admirable skill by Hassan. He and his party found themselves suddenly attacked in front and in the rear by two bands, each of which was as well mounted and more numerous than his own, so that after a brief

but ineffectual resistance he and his followers were all captured, and bound with the same cords which they had brought to secure the freebooters. Their arms and horses having been taken from them, and having been placed at some distance under a strong guard, Hassan ordered them all to be released from their bonds; and Osman Bey having been brought before him, he said—

‘Illustrious Governor, I think that two hundred and fifty was the number of blows which you once ordered to be administered to the back of your humble servant, and in dealing with so high a personage I surely ought not to show myself less liberal in my measure of reward; neither have I forgotten the debt that I owe you for the kindness which you showed me in Cairo, when you endeavoured to take by treachery a life which you had not the courage openly to attempt. Inshallah! I will now pay my debts; after which we will be friends or enemies, as you may choose.’

At the conclusion of this address two of the freebooters stepped forward by Hassan’s order, and in spite of Osman Bey’s struggles and cries, applied their courbatches vigorously to his shoulders until Hassan called out ‘enough.’ They then tied him firmly, with his arms pinioned, on a lively young donkey, to the tail of which they



fastened a bunch of prickly shrubs to quicken its movements, and having started it on the road to Siout left the discomfited Governor to re-enter his capital in this humiliating guise, amid the suppressed jeers of its population.

As for the troopers, Hassan gave them a good supper, expressed to them his regret that he could not restore to them their arms and horses, which had become the property of his band ; told them it was a great pity that such brave, honest fellows should be obliged to serve under so unworthy a chief, and having given each of them a present of five piasters, told them that they were at liberty to return to their several homes, or to their service in Siout, as it might suit their own convenience.

On another occasion, Abou-Hashem, who had been engaged with a small portion of the band in a predatory excursion not far from the town of Girgeh, had been attacked by a party sent for that purpose by its governor, and in spite of a desperate resistance had been taken prisoner. His comrades, most of them wounded, escaped, and brought the news to Hassan, who was with the remainder of the band encamped at a well only a few leagues distant from the scene of the affray.

After reproaching them bitterly for their cowardice in surviving the capture of a comrade who had once been their chief, and after ascertaining from them that the soldiers were too numerous to afford him a reasonable prospect of rescue by open force, he resolved to effect it by stratagem, or perish in the attempt. Dressing himself in his kawàss costume, and taking with him only the trusty black, Abd-hoo, on whose fidelity and presence of mind he could confidently rely, he mounted Shèitan, and set off at speed towards Girgeh, hoping to intercept the party before they reached the immediate neighbourhood of the town. Both he and his follower were fully armed, and the latter bore with him a chibouq and tobacco-bag to support his character of attendant on the supposed kawàss. Hassan gave his instructions to Abd-hoo as they galloped across the plain, and the confident grin of the sturdy negro assured him that he was understood, and would, if possible, be obeyed.

Fortune so far favoured our adventurers that several miles before reaching Girgeh they saw the party of which they were in search seated on the ground, near a spring of water, and refreshing themselves with the fragrant fumes of the pipe.

Slackening his speed as he approached, Hassan

drew near the group, and saluting them courteously in Turkish, sat down in the midst of them, nearest to one whom by his dress he knew to be their 'Yuzbashi,' or captain, and ordering Abd-hoo to fill his pipe, our hero commenced a conversation on the heat, and indifferent subjects, with a careless ease that would have done honour to an old diplomatist. The captain was charmed with the polite frankness of his new guest, who failed not to call him colonel by mistake, and who ere long drew from him an account of the object and success of his morning's expedition.

No sooner did he hear that one, and one supposed to be of some rank in the band of the formidable Hassan, had been captured, than he started with feigned surprise, and inquired, pointing to Abou-Hashem, who sat disarmed and pinioned at some distance, whether that was the fellow whom they had captured? A reply being given in the affirmative—

'By your head, Colonel,' he said, 'I will go and look at the vagabond; they have done much evil to my lord the Pasha, and I have seen service against them. You son of a dog,' continued he, drawing near the prisoner, and addressing him in a loud and angry voice, 'methinks you are the very fellow who killed my brother near Siout;

you have just his ugly, villanous look, and now I will have your blood.'

So saying he drew a sharp poniard, and brandished it over the head of the prisoner.

'Do not kill the vagabond, O Aga,' shouted the captain, still lazily smoking his pipe, 'for I hope to get five or six purses for his apprehension—could I have caught his chief, Mashallah! I would have claimed one hundred.'

'Inshallah! you will claim them another time,' said Hassan, politely; 'meanwhile, I must give this vagabond a prick with my poniard; I will not touch his life, but I wish him not to forget me.'

So saying he brandished his poniard again, and advanced close to the prisoner in order to see how with one rapid cut he could sever his bonds.

'Do not touch him, Aga, with your knife,' cried out Abd-hoo; 'here is a courbatch wherewith to beat him.'

Under this pretext he had led Shèitan and his own horse near to the prisoner; at the distance of only a few yards a groom was holding a horse which, from its appearance and trappings, seemed to be that of the captain.

'Now is the moment,' whispered Hassan to Abou-Hashem; 'be ready to spring on that horse.'

As he spoke he raised his knife as if about to

strike, at the same time continuing to threaten and abuse Abou-Hashem in a loud voice, while the Turks were laughing at the anger of Hassan and the assumed terror of the captive, who called out 'Amân, amân!' (mercy). With one swift stroke of his knife he divided the cords with which he was pinioned, and, springing aside, knocked down the unsuspecting sâis who held the captain's horse. No sooner had he done so than Abou-Hashem was in the saddle; Hassan and Abd-hoo jumped on their horses, and in a second the freebooters were at full speed on their way to the desert. Shots were fired at them from pistols and carabines, some of which took effect, but not enough to stop their headlong course.

Hassan received a ball in the arm, and another in the side, but he succeeded in his daring attempt. A few of the best mounted of the Turks who were able to keep the fugitives in sight, found themselves, after a gallop of several leagues, in sight of Hassan's band, who received their chief and his rescued lieutenant with shouts of triumph, while the troopers, seeing that all chance of recapturing them was hopeless, wheeled their wearied horses towards Girgeh, glad to escape themselves unpursued.

It may seem a strange illustration of the per-

versity of human nature, but we are bound to record the fact, that this trait of daring courage and devotion to save a comrade secured to Hassan the admiration and attachment of all the band excepting the man whom he had risked his life to rescue; but Abou-Hashem was one of those envious and jealous characters who could not bear to see and feel the superiority of another, and in whom a fretful and vexatious sense of obligation obliterated the feelings of gratitude which the generous conduct of Hassan towards him ought to have inspired.

One other instance of our hero's humorous audacity which reached the Viceroy's ears during that summer, and which excited his mirth almost as much as his anger, deserves to be recorded.

About this epoch his Highness had collected a body of troops in a camp near the town of Esneh, in Upper Egypt, who were undergoing drill and training for service against the refractory tribes in the Soudan.

Hassan had received intelligence from one of his spies that a large sum of money had just been transmitted to Esneh for the payment of these troops, and was in the keeping of a certain Moktar Effendi, who resided in a village a few miles distant from the encampment, and who, on

account of this charge, was dignified in the neighbourhood by the title of Defterdar.

Of this sum Hassan resolved to endeavour to obtain possession by stratagem, and he set about it with the confident coolness which characterized all his proceedings. Leaving the greater part of his band in the desert, at a considerable distance from the village, he dressed himself in his former khaznadar uniform, and six or eight of the most resolute and best mounted of his followers in dresses becoming the attendants of a man in authority, gathered from the spoils of plundered caravans; he took with him also a firman, bearing the seal of Mohammed Ali, which had been obtained by similar means. This firman, although having no reference to the particular object in view, stated in general terms that Latif-Aga, the bearer, was on duty in Upper Egypt on Government service, and ordered the Governors of towns and provinces to afford him all necessary assistance.

Armed with this instrument, and with others of a more deadly kind in case of necessity, Hassan proceeded leisurely about mid-day to the village, having desired his followers to observe the strictest gravity and decorum in their demeanour, and having, as usual, invested the

ready-witted and faithful Abd-hoo with the office of pipe-bearer, while Abou-Hamedi was to be left in charge of the horses and of the attendants, who were not expected to accompany their chief to the presence of the Defterdar.

Hassan had no difficulty in finding the residence of that well-known personage, and having announced himself as being charged with an important message from the Viceroy, was immediately ushered into the room where sat the Defterdar in company with two other individuals, who respectfully took their leave on hearing of the confidential communication of which the handsome stranger was the bearer.

Moktar Effendi was a fat, pousy little man, and though extremely timid, puffed up with a high sense of his own local importance. Hassan, as is the custom in the East, began the conversation with all sorts of common-place observations, which he took care to interlard with fulsome compliments, gratifying to the vanity of his host, and after two pipes and cups of coffee had been with due ceremony discussed, he prepared to enter upon the business with which he was supposed to be entrusted; but having observed a small room at the side, which seemed better suited to his purpose than the reception-room, which com-



manded a view of the court below, he proposed, in a confidential tone, that they should retire thither for a conference, which he said it was necessary that their attendants should not overhear.

To this proposal the Defterdar, who had read the firman presented to him by Hassan, made no objection, and they retired thither accordingly. No sooner were they seated than our hero, who had taken care to place himself between his host and the door, proceeded to inform him that he had come to relieve him of the charge of the money which had been transmitted to him for the payment of the troops. The astonished Defterdar said in a hesitating tone, that although he had no doubt of the authority under which his guest was acting, he could not transfer such a charge without direct instructions from the Viceroy.

‘I will show you the authority under which I act,’ said our hero, in the same polite and affable tone which he had hitherto used ; and as he spoke he threw open his outer pelisse, and drawing a pistol from his belt, presented it within two feet of the Defterdar’s forehead, who observed with horror another pistol, and a dagger suspended from the same formidable belt. ‘Excellent Defterdar,’ he continued, ‘I do not wish to expose

you to any unnecessary alarm or danger, but it is necessary for your safety that you give up to me the money in question. I am not Latif Aga, but Hassan, the Child of the Pyramid, of whom you have perhaps heard, and who, as you may know, am not to be trifled with.'

At the sound of that dreaded name, and at the sight of the pistol still pointed at his face, the unfortunate Defterdar grew speechless with affright; a cold perspiration broke out upon his forehead, and his tongue clove to his palate.

'For the love of Allah,' he gasped, 'do not murder me.'

'I have no intention of hurting you,' said Hassan, 'if you only do as I bid you without delay; but I warn you that if you utter a sound to compromise my safety you are a dead man. My pipe-bearer, at your outer door, and all my attendants below are armed as I am, and we are strong enough, if it be requisite, to destroy you and all your household. But though I am not 'Latif' by name, I desire to be so in my conduct;\* therefore if you are quiet and reasonable you have nothing to fear. You will please now to call whichever of your confidential servants has the

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\* 'Latif' signifies courteous, polite, amiable, &c.

care of this money, and tell him to bring it here and deliver it to me, as I am charged to convey it to the commanding officer at the camp. If in giving him this order you endeavour to betray me by word or sign, you die where you sit, and your servant will be killed by my pipe-bearer without.'

The unhappy Defterdar, after giving vent to sundry suppressed groans, in which 'Allah!' 'Oh my misfortune,' 'Mercy and destiny,' were feebly uttered, and seeing no hope of saving his life excepting in implicit obedience to the orders of his formidable guest, clapped his hands, and on the entrance of his servant desired him forthwith to bring the money which Latif Aga was charged by the Viceroy to convey to the camp.

The servant noticed the evident tremor and perturbation under which his master spoke, but like a true Oriental he attributed it to regret at losing so fair an opportunity of appropriating a certain portion of the money to his own advantage, by cheating the soldiers in its distribution, and he soon re-appeared, bearing with him three or four bags of gold, and one of larger dimensions containing Austrian dollars.

'Is the whole sum here?' said Hassan in a stern voice. 'Bring me the letter that accom-

panied the money, and then count it before me, that I may see whether the amounts tally.'

His orders having been obeyed, the servant counted the money before him, which (wonderful to relate of Egypt) agreed precisely with the letter of advice.

'You are a faithful servant,' said Hassan, 'and although I cannot touch this money which belongs to others, here is a bakshish for yourself.' So saying he threw him two or three pieces of gold from his own purse, adding, 'Send hither my pipe-bearer and mirakhor (chief groom) that they may take charge of this money, and bring me a dooàyeh (Oriental case containing pens and ink) and some paper that I may give your master a receipt in due form.'

Abou-Hamedi and Abd-hoo having been summoned, and taken charge of their trust with a gravity and deportment suited to their assumed characters, our hero wrote the receipt in a bold hand, and in the following terms:—

'I, Hassan, Child of the Pyramid, hereby acknowledge that I have received from Moktar Effendi the sum of one hundred and twenty purses (600*l.*) belonging to the Egyptian Government, and that it is my intention to repay the same when it suits my convenience. I further

add, that the said Moktar Effendi only delivered me this money when under fear of his life, and when he had no means of resisting the force which I had at hand; he should therefore be held exempt from blame by his humane and just lord, Mohammed Ali.'

Having delivered this receipt to the still bewildered Effendi, Hassan said to him, 'My good friend, now that our business is terminated, we will have one more pipe of fellowship before we part; but remember that my eye is upon you.'

The pipe having been duly smoked, and the attendants dismissed, Hassan once more addressed his terrified host as follows:—

'Effendi, the most disagreeable part of my duty remains to be performed, as I would fain have parted from you with politeness and friendship; but as your duty would require that you should alarm all the village as soon as my foot is in the stirrup, it is necessary for my safety and for yours that I should secure your quietude—your servants will soon come to release you, but for awhile it is requisite that you should be bound.' So saying, he produced a cord, which he had brought for the purpose, and having bound his terror-stricken host hand and foot, and stuffed a handkerchief into his mouth to prevent his calling out,

he walked out, and leisurely descending the stairs, mounted his horse, giving pieces of silver to the servants at the door with a liberality worthy of a Bey or Pasha.

He and his party proceeded slowly on the road towards the soldiers' encampment, until they were out of sight of the village, when they suddenly turned off towards the desert, and after an hour's gallop rejoined the remainder of the band. On the following morning at daylight they were seventy or eighty miles distant from the scene of this feat.

It is needless to portray the astonishment of Moktar Effendi's servants when they found their master bound and gagged in a corner of his room, grunting and sputtering in his vain endeavours to call for help. When they released his tongue and his limbs, his first act was to ask, in a trembling voice, 'Is he gone?'

'Who?' they replied; 'his Excellency the Bey, your visitor?—yes, he is gone.'

'The Bey!' muttered Moktar Effendi, whose courage was now partially restored. 'Know ye not, sons of dogs and asses that ye are, that the scoundrel was no Bey, but Hassan Ebn-el-Heram, the outlaw chief, who has plundered me, and laughed at my beard. Allah! Allah! what dust

has fallen on my head—what dirt have I eaten ! There lies his cursed receipt for the money. How can I send it to Mohammed Ali? he will defile the graves of my forefathers. Alas ! alas ! there is no power nor trust save in Allah.'

Such were the terms in which the unhappy Defterdar bewailed his fate, and prepared to enclose to the Viceroy a full report of his misfortune, together with the receipt left by the audacious outlaw. Mohammed Ali, in one of those moods of clemency and generosity which were not unfrequent with him, forgave the poor Defterdar, and replaced the plundered money from his own purse, saying, ' Hassan shall one day fulfil his promise of repayment.'

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The cool breezes of November had returned, and the Thorpe party were again at Cairo, on their way to Thebes, where they proposed to pass the winter. During the few days that they spent in the capital, before prosecuting their voyage, they visited the various objects of interest which they had not found time to see during their former stay ; but as the environs of Cairo are nearly as familiar to the reading and to the travelling world as those of Rome and Naples, we will not inflict upon our readers a description of them.

One scene, however, which they witnessed was so illustrative of the superstition of the Cairians that it is not unworthy of notice.

Returning one day from an excursion to the Mokattan hills, they saw an immense crowd of persons, of all ages and conditions, on horses, mules, donkeys, and on foot, flocking to a spot called Sabaâ Benât (the seven daughters) on the edge of the Desert, about two miles to the south of the city. Piercing through the outskirts of this mixed assemblage, they were surprised to see beys, effendis, merchants, priests, and beggars, all divested of their outer garments, and rolling themselves with frantic energy and gesticulation in the sand.

On inquiring through Demetri what might be the meaning of this strange ceremonial, they learnt that it was a miracle, wrought through the instrumentality of a Moghrebi saint (such as in Algiers are termed Marabouts), who had been warned in a religious trance that the sand in this spot possessed a healing virtue, and that all who rolled themselves therein should be immediately cured of any malady by which they might be afflicted.

News of this miracle had spread like wildfire through the city, and for several days all who



were, or imagined themselves under the influence of any malady, hastened to avail themselves of the holy panacea.

In some instances the pious fraud worked out its own verification. One fat Bey, whose only ailment was plethora, brought on by gluttony, actually rolled himself so energetically and effectually, that he perspired and vomited under the unwonted exertion. He returned home so much relieved, that he spread the fame of the miraculous spot throughout all the members of the Divan, and thus the superstition of the fanatic Arabs was communicated to the grave and influential portion of the Turkish community.

Mr. Thorpe and his party made their way through this motley crowd with no little difficulty, and they found the whole road from the sacred spot to the city dusty and thronged as that from London to Epsom on a Derby day.\*

‘How can they believe,’ said Mr. Thorpe to Demetri, ‘that by rolling in that sand they can cure all diseases? Have the saints and der-wishes so much power over the people’s belief?’

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\* Lest the reader should suppose that this scene has been exaggerated, or represents a state of superstition no longer existing at Cairo, it may be as well to mention that it was witnessed by the author exactly as here described in the summer of 1852.

‘Saints and derwishes,’ said Demetri, ‘can make them believe that the Nile comes from the moon, or that the Pyramids were built of cheeses made from the milk of Pharaoh’s cows. But that is nothing, priests can do as much in my country. If you want to see what the Cairians can swallow, you should go to that dome, under which you will find a jack-ass, daily fed on the best of provender at the public expense, and almost worshipped by the people.’

As he spoke, he pointed to a cupola, erected over the tomb of a Saint or Sheik, in the interior of which a donkey was contentedly chewing his straw and beans, totally unconscious of the religious honours paid to him.

‘How came the donkey to obtain this great measure of respect?’ inquired Mr. Thorpe.

‘He belonged,’ replied Demetri, ‘to a builder, who was engaged in repairing some tombs in the neighbourhood; this donkey had been one of a score employed in carrying bricks and mortar. It would seem that he had contrived to shake off his load, and had gone for shelter into that half-ruined Sheik’s tomb; meanwhile his owner, with the other donkeys, had been suddenly called off to do some building-work at a distance for the Viceroy.’

‘That same night, it appears, that a Fikih (priest), of some celebrity in the town, had a dream, warning him that, if he wished his prayers to be heard, he must go to the Sheik’s tomb in question, and pay honour to whomsoever he might find under its roof. Hastening thither in the morning, he found it, to his astonishment, tenanted by a donkey, to which, in order to obey the warning he had received, he made an offering of some beans and barley. Having communicated his dream to his religious brethren, it was soon spread all over the town. Pious Mussulmans flocked thither to pray for their sick relatives, and the long-eared recluse tasted of the sweets of idleness, plenty, and all the other ingredients in the cup of donkey-happiness.’\*

‘Why, Demetri,’ said Mr. Thorpe, laughing, ‘you have finished your tale in a style worthy of the ‘Arabian Nights.’’

‘It is no wonder,’ replied the Greek; ‘I hear so many of those story-narrators at the Arab *cafés* in the town that I borrow their style almost without knowing it.’

‘And perhaps their money, too,’ whispered Emily to her father.

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\* This incident actually occurred at Cairo in 1849-50.

‘Mohammed Ali well knows,’ continued the Greek, ‘how to take advantage of this popular reverence for the tombs of sheiks. A short time ago one stood close to a garden of his, and the visitors who flocked to it, disturbing his privacy, he determined to remove it in a manner that should offer no offence to the reputation of the sheik or the fanaticism of the people.

‘Collecting in secret a large body of labourers from one of his distant villages, he caused them in the course of a single night to destroy the tomb, and to rebuild it at a spot about two miles distant, in the same form and of the same materials, after which they were sent back to their own village as secretly as they had been summoned.

‘On the following day all Cairo was full of the new miracle—Sheik-el-Ghazi had transported his own tomb two miles in the course of the night. Thousands flocked to the miraculous shrine, which is to this day an object of the deepest reverence in the neighbourhood.’\*

The next day Mr. Thorpe and his party went to pay a visit to Delì Pasha, previous to their

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\* This incident also actually took place, though somewhat later than the period of our tale.

departure for Upper Egypt. Emily and her mother were conducted to the harem, where, after a brief and uninteresting visit to the senior Khanum, they went to the apartment occupied by Amina.

Both were struck by the change which a year had wrought in her appearance ; not that she was less lovely than before, but her bright and mirthful glance had given place to a look of saddened tenderness, and a general expression of melancholy was shed over features which were so lately radiant with hope and with the joys of the transient hour.

Neither did it escape Amina's observation that Emily looked more pale and depressed than on her former visit, and no sooner were her two guests seated, one on each side of her, with the wife of one of the Italian doctors, who officiated as interpreter in front of them, than she began to inquire after Emily's health, and how and where she had passed the summer.

These inquiries having been replied to, and the customary compliments exchanged, while they sipped their coffee from Lilliputian cups, enclosed in finjâns of gold filigree, studded with diamonds, the conversation assumed a more general turn, for Amina soon found that neither of her guests

could bear the pipe, although the tobacco was of the mildest fragrance, and the jewelled amber mouthpieces were such as might tempt the lips of a smoke-abominating admiral.

In the course of the conversation, Mrs. Thorpe, whose tact was by no means proportionate to her volubility in commonplace talk, observed—

‘How sad it is that young Hassan, who came up with us in the dahabiah last year, and who seemed so gentle and polite, should now be a ferocious captain of outlaws and banditti. I hear that he has become a terror to the whole country.’ At these words a burning blush mantled over Amina’s neck, and crimsoned her cheek up to the temples.

‘The subject is painful,’ she said, in a tone in which anger was discernible through embarrassment. ‘You forget, madam, that he risked his life to save mine, and was afterwards driven from our roof by an act of cruelty never sanctioned by my father. He is now once more a Bedouin in his native desert, and an English lady should know that Bedouins, although wild and warlike in their lives, are not banditti.’

Poor Mrs. Thorpe saw by the hurried accent and kindling glance of the Turkish maiden that she had ventured on dangerous ground, from

which she made a precipitate and somewhat awkward retreat. Amina turned her head towards Emily, and was surprised to see a large tear trickling down her cheek. Touched by this sympathy on the part of one so little known to her, she placed her hand in that of Emily, who returned its pressure in silence.

‘Come,’ she said to her new friend, ‘to see my little private boudoir,’ and waving off her attendants, she led Emily into the retired spot where she had imbibed the first draughts of that love which now filled her whole existence.

Once alone together, the two girls looked each with a long inquiring gaze into the eyes of the other, as if they would read the secrets of their mutual sympathy. Neither spoke; neither could feel sure of divining aright the feelings by which the other was so strongly moved; but a bond of sympathy was there, irresistible, although unexplained, as they fell into each other’s arms, and mingled their tears in silence.

## CHAPTER IX.

THE THORPE PARTY PROCEED TOWARDS THEBES, AND  
MEET WITH AN ADVENTURE BY THE WAY.

ONCE more our party of English travellers are on the Nile. They have passed Siout and Kench, and another day's fair wind would bring them to Thebes. They have left winter with its dreary train of snow, and ice, and sleet, far behind, and as they lie basking in the warm sun, and inhaling the soft breezes of the south, all of them, according to the constitution of their several minds and temperaments, give themselves up to the enjoyment of the bright and genial scene around them.

Mr. Thorpe held in his hand a volume of Diodorus Siculus, but his eye wandered often from its pages, and as it rested on Emily's countenance, he gladly traced the symptoms of improving health, which the climate had already produced; nevertheless, it was not without anxiety that he remarked a look of thoughtful sadness which had of late become habitual to her, and though the sketch-book and pencil were in



her hand, the page was blank, and her thoughts were otherwise employed.

Mrs. Thorpe reclined on a sofa, skimming over the leaves of the last novel received from Europe, while Selden had escaped from the clutches of his pedantic tutor, and amused himself with firing occasionally at the huge crocodiles basking on the sandy promontories projecting into the river. Whether the ball missed them or glanced harmless from their scaly armour, the effect was equally to make them roll their unwieldy carcasses again into the element where they can defy the pursuit of man.

Mr. Foyster continued still to enlighten the simple mind of Mary Powell with his learned commentaries on the surrounding countries and scenes. But a year's experience had not been lost upon the rustic damsel: she had discovered the effect produced by her bright eyes and rosy cheeks on the heart of the butler, and also that neither his learning, nor his treatment of the king's English, justified the tone of superiority in which he had formerly addressed her—in short, the tables were turned, and while Mary's broad-brimmed Maltese hat was jauntily raised on one side, with an air of coquetry far from unbecoming, Mr. Foyster's former patronizing smile had been

exchanged for an obsequious flattery, which rendered the maiden more sensible to her own attractions than to the merits of her admirer.

‘ Well, Miss Mary,’ said the butler, ‘ in another day we shall be again at Thebes ; and I hear as how we be going to spend the whole winter there. Lord help us ! what shall we do with ourselves ? no society, no plays, no occupation, no nothing !’

‘ I don’t know what you call no society,’ said Mary, with a slight toss of her head ; ‘ there be others, who, if they were in Mr. Foyster’s place, would have better taste and better manners than to say so.’

‘ Bless you, Miss Mary,’ said the abashed butler, ‘ I did not mean to offend ; I made no inference to you ; but you have become so mighty captatious of late, that I can’t make any observation whatsoever without your catching me up as a cat does a mouse.’

‘ Then, Mr. Foyster, I suppose I am to consider your speech a compliment,’ said Mary, with demure gravity.

‘ If my tongue could rightly depress the feelings of my ’art, everything that I said to *you*, Miss Mary, would be a compliment,’ replied Foyster, gallantly placing his right hand on that part of his person where his ‘ ’art’ was supposed

to reside; 'but I was a speaking of all our party collectedly, and I do not suppose you can find it very amusing to sit for hours on a stone by Miss Emily while she is sketching some old temple; neither do I find it a very lively occupation to accompany the governor, with a hammer in my hand, while he is copying some ierogliffic description, or chipping a corner off the tomb of Pharaoh's father.'

Here their conversation was interrupted by loud cries for 'help' and 'mercy,' from the boatmen on the shore who had been employed in slowly towing the heavy dahabiàhs from the bank against an adverse wind and current.

Immediately above the path on which they had been walking was a dense copse of low brushwood, from which twenty or twenty-five men, well-armed, sprung upon them, and in an instant they were thrown to the ground and secured, whilst the steersman, and the few others who remained on board, exclaiming, 'It is the band of Hassan Ebn-Heram,' gave themselves up for lost.

The dahabiàhs having been hauled up to the bank (during which operation loaded carbines were presented at the helmsman to warn him of the consequence of resistance), the freebooters sprang on board, and having bound all the males

of the party, including Mr. Thorpe, his son, the valiant Hieronymus Moss, the Missionary, and the servants, they proceeded to ransack the cabins and collect the spoil with a coolness and deliberation which could only be the result of long practice.

A few of Mrs. Thorpe's silks and shawls, as well as her jewels and trinkets, were tied up in a bundle, whilst she looked on in a silence which partook almost as much of indignation as of terror. Emily stood with blanched cheek and bloodless lip beside her pinioned father, and as the words, 'And this, too, from him !' escaped her, it seemed clear that she suffered less from the terror and injury inflicted on her parents than from the thought that it was all the work of Hassan.

'Quick, my men,' shouted Abou-Hashem, for he it was who led the party ; 'let us collect the spoil and mount, for fear of interruption.'

The last package brought out from the cabin contained Mr. Thorpe's writing-desk, and he called aloud to Demetri, who was likewise tied on the deck, to explain to them that he would willingly give them his money, but that the desk contained papers of value to him but of no use to them, for which reason he hoped they would leave it. While Demetri was explaining this to

Abou-Hashem, a crashing noise was heard among the bushes of the copse on the bank, and in a second Hassan, followed by Abou-Hamedi and Abd-hoo, stood on the deck of the dahabiàh. The perspiration that streamed from his face, and the crimsoned foam that stained the lower border of his serwal,\* betokened the furious speed at which he had ridden; the veins on his forehead were swelled, and there was a dangerous fire in his eye, which his habitual self-command was unable at the moment to quell.

‘Allah have mercy upon us!’ groaned the Arab boatmen, recognising at once by his haughty look and towering stature the terrible outlaw of whose predatory feats they had heard so much; ‘we are all dead men now.’

‘Mashallah! what an eye,’ muttered another, who had been on hunting expeditions in Soudan; ‘it is like that of a lion who has been struck by a javelin.’

Emily ventured to cast a timid glance at his countenance, and she trembled from head to foot, so different was it from that of the youth who, twelve or fourteen months before, had beguiled the hours with Arab songs and legends. Now his

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\* Loose trousers, generally made of cotton.

breast laboured with a fierce agitation, which was attributed by her and those around to a thirst for blood and rapine engendered by the lawless habits of his late career ; but the mystery was cleared up as soon as his excited wrath found vent in words. The freebooters dropped the half-raised packets of booty, and listened in sulky silence, as, addressing Abou-Hashem, who stood within a few paces of him, he said—

‘How have you dared to disobey my orders? Did I not tell you last night when our spy reported and described these dahabiàhs, that they belonged to Franghis who were my friends, whose bread and salt I had eaten, and that I would not permit them to be injured?’

‘And why are we to be cheated of our spoil?’ replied Abou-Hashem, furious at being called upon to resign so rich a booty ; ‘why are we to be robbed of the fruit of our risks and toil by your sympathy with these unbelieving dogs? Am I not right, comrades?’ said he, looking round at the armed men now grouped behind him ; ‘we will no longer submit to this tyranny, our arms shall keep what our arms have won.’ A murmur of applause from his brother-plunderers followed this speech.

‘Hark ye, men,’ said Hassan, in a voice which

seemed to gather stern composure as the danger grew more imminent. 'I am your chief; freely elected by yourselves, and, by Allah! while I live amongst you, I will be obeyed; and whilst I live, not a parcel of booty, not a morsel of bread shall ye plunder from these boats.'

'Take, then, example from me,' shouted Abou-Hashem to the freebooters behind him; and as he spoke he drew a pistol from his belt to level it at his leader's breast; but Hassan's eye had been upon him, and quick as thought one blow from the terrible mace sent the pistol high into the air, and a second stretched Abou-Hashem senseless on the deck.

'Take example from him,' said Hassan to the freebooters in a tone of bitter scorn; 'it is a deed worthy of the warriors of the Desert to murder their chief and to plunder those whose bread he has eaten.' Then observing symptoms of hesitation in the fierce and lawless band, he continued, 'Return to your duty, and I may yet forgive you; if you refuse, the consequences be on your own heads.'

With a pistol in each hand he calmly awaited the result of the conference which they held in a few brief and broken sentences. During this time Abou-Hamedi and Abd-hoo both stood

beside their leader, pistol in hand, and ready to spend the last drop of their blood in saving or avenging him.

Hassan took advantage of the brief pause to say aside to Emily, who still stood trembling near her bound father, 'Sit down, sit down, lady, beside your father ; pistol-balls may be flying in a moment, and a stray one might strike you. It is only my life now that they seek ; and if I fall, tell them in Cairo that Hassan's death redeemed the last year of his life.'

Having uttered these words in the low and gentle tone so well preserved in Emily's remembrance, he once more addressed the still hesitating mutineers.

'Quick, men ! declare your choice—obedience or death. There is no path between the two.' None spoke in answer, nor dared to meet the eye of his chief. 'It is enough, my men ; I see that you are ashamed, and I may yet forgive this morning's work. Abd-hoo, unbind the Franghi Bey. Abou-Hamedi, shoot the first man dead who moves an arm to interrupt him.'

Whilst this order was being obeyed, and Abd-hoo was cutting the cords by which Mr. Thorpe had been bound, Hassan stood silently but



keenly scanning the countenances of the mutineers. That there was doubt and diversity of opinion among them he clearly saw, and that was enough for him. The issue he knew he could trust to his own resources.

‘What, my men,’ he called aloud, ‘still hesitating to repair a fault into which you were led by this headstrong fool!’ pointing to the motionless form of Abou-Hashem. ‘Since I have been your chief have I been last in the attack, or first in the flight? Have I been miserly in spending with you my blood or my money?’ A murmur of ‘Never’ broke from the group. ‘Why, then, when I have so often led you to plunder and to victory, did you desire to cover my head with ashes, my name with infamy? You did not know, what Abou-Hashem knew, that these dahabiàhs belonged to my friends—that I had eaten from their table, and shared their salt! When all the provinces of Egypt are open to our swift horses and our sharpened steel, could you, brave warriors of the Desert, find no more honourable foray than to attack defenceless strangers, and those, too, the friends of your leader? If such be your mind, I know you no more. Go and choose another leader from among

thieves and moharrabin,\* for Hassan will no longer be your chief.'

'We never knew that these Franghis were your friends, or that you had eaten their salt,' said one, who undertook to be spokesman for the rest.

'I thought so,' replied Hassan; 'but he, Abou-Hashem, knew it well. He deceived you, and he has paid the penalty. Come hither, men, and remove him to yonder sant tree† on the bank; perhaps he yet lives, and may be wiser hereafter. Remember that not a man is to remove the value of one para from these boats. I have sworn it, and, Wallah! if I live I will keep my oath.'

Like hounds chidden by a huntsman, the subdued freebooters mechanically obeyed. Such is the power of habit even among the lawless, and such the influence of a determined and superior character even over those who are supposed to acknowledge no authority but force.

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\* Moharrabin are deserters from the Egyptian army, who sometimes infest the provinces in considerable numbers; and as many have carried with them their arms and accoutrements, and are always joined by thieves and runaways from justice, they are marauders very formidable to travellers and caravans.

† Sant, the Arabic name for the 'acacia hilotica.' It is a thorn-bearing variety, its wood very hard, and its yellow flower extremely fragrant.

Whilst they were employed in removing their stunned and still senseless lieutenant, Abou-Hamedi and Abd-hoo busied themselves, by Hassan's order, in cutting the bonds of the captives, all of whom, Mr. Thorpe included, came to shake hands with Hassan, and to thank him for his generous interposition on their behalf, and would not listen to his expression of deep regret that they should have been exposed to so much alarm and inconvenience by his followers. But the victory had been won, for they slowly left the dahabiàhs without attempting to remove one of the parcels of plunder which they had collected on the deck.

Mr. Thorpe, after listening with grave attention to a few words timidly whispered in his ear by Emily, said to Hassan—

‘My brave young friend, we owe all we have on board, perhaps even our lives, to you, and we cannot bear that you should again incur the risk of living among those lawless and bloodthirsty men; they will owe you a spite for depriving them of their spoil, and perhaps when you are off your guard will assassinate you.’

‘Alas, sir, you are in error,’ said Hassan, in a voice whose melancholy and soft cadence contrasted strangely with the stern, deep tones in

which he had lately addressed his followers. 'You owe me nothing but forgiveness ; for were it not for me, this lawless band might not have existed, and you might have pursued your journey without this vexatious incident. My lot is cast among them for the present ; least of all could I leave them now, when my doing so would be attributed to fear. We all of us owe a life to destiny, and if a sword or bullet put an end to mine, where is the father or mother, sister or child, to shed a tear on the tomb of Hassan. No ; these men must know and feel that I am their master, and fear them not ! The day will come, Inshallah ! before long, when I can part with them without regret or shame. May your journey be prosperous and your days prolonged.'

As he said these words he bade them adieu, and in the Franghi fashion shook hands with all the Europeans, without distinction of rank. He noticed, however, that Emily had whispered a few words to her father, and had then retired into the cabin.

'Hassan,' said Mr. Thorpe, taking him aside, and speaking in a low voice, 'before we left Cairo, my wife and Emily paid a visit to the harem of Delì Pasha ; they saw his daughter, and I must tell you that your present mode of life

makes them both most unhappy.' Hassan averted his face, and spoke not. Mr. Thorpe continued, 'Yes, Hassan, it makes every one unhappy who has an interest in your welfare. It is a career in which you are exposed every day to lose your own life, or to take that of others, without honour or glory. Be persuaded to abandon it ere it is too late.'

Mastering his emotions by a strong effort, Hassan replied—

'You know how I was driven from society by injustice;—I know that the advice which you give is kindly meant, and I thank you for it; but we who are children of the Desert attach no dishonour to the life that I now lead; it is such as our fathers have led before us for centuries.'

'But you are not in the desert, Hassan,' said Mr. Thorpe, gently; 'those to whom your band is a terror are merchants, villagers, and travellers; even now it was only at the risk of your life that you saved us and our property from the ferocity of those who call you chief. Can you wonder that the daughter of Delì Pasha should weep when your name is mentioned?'

'Did she weep?—when, and where?' said Hassan, with a convulsive start.

'Yes; she wept in my daughter's arms. She

could not speak, but her altered appearance shows how much she has suffered.'

'Allah! Allah!' said Hassan, hiding his face for a moment in his hands; then, as if ashamed of his emotion, he wrung Mr. Thorpe's hand with an energy that nearly dislocated the worthy antiquary's fingers, and hastily uttering 'Farewell, sir; I will not forget what you have said,' he leapt ashore, followed by Abou-Hamedi and Abd-hoo, and rejoined his band beyond the copse whence they had attacked the dahabiàh.

For many days the life of Abou-Hashem was despaired of, and even when, by slow degrees, he recovered somewhat of his strength, and was able to sit on horseback, his senses seemed to be wavering and unsettled, so that he was quite unable to act as leader to that part of the band which had accompanied him originally from the western deserts, and which composed two-thirds of its effective strength.

Their countenances wore a sulky and dissatisfied air, and Hassan saw that on the first favourable opportunity they were not unlikely to desert or betray him. With the bold frankness which formed the leading feature of his character, he resolved to come to an open explanation with them, and then to resign the office which they had

conferred on him. Having called them all together, he said—

‘My men, I see that you are still vexed at my having disappointed you of the spoil of those dahabiàhs;—as for the blow which I gave to Abou-Hashem, I speak not of it,—you saw that he attempted to take my life, and I defended it. How much think you that you would have obtained had I permitted you to plunder those Franks?’

‘We might have divided perhaps twenty purses (100*l.*), besides the Franghi clothes, which were indeed of little value to us,’ replied one fellow, in a sulky tone.

‘How much have you belonging to me?’ said Hassan to Abou-Hamedi, who had charge of that portion of the spoil which had fallen to his share as leader.

‘I have forty purses,’ replied Abou-Hamedi, after examining the contents of a bag which he carried in his belt.

‘Here then, my comrades, are thirty purses,’ said Hassan, again addressing the freebooters; ‘take them, and divide them among you; they will compensate for your disappointment. Abou-Hamedi and Abd-hoo, you have both been true and faithful to me, here are five purses for each of you;—

and now I resign my command, and leave you to follow your own counsel and your own path;—we part as friends, I hope?’

‘Mashallah! your hand is always open,’ shouted the freebooters, ashamed of their late conduct; ‘stay with us, and be still our leader; we will never disobey you again.’

‘It cannot be,’ said Hassan; ‘my destiny compels me to go to Cairo, where certain death would await you all, and where it is not unlikely to await me also; but what is written must come to pass,—there is neither power nor strength but in Allah. Abd-hoo, bring me my horse. Farewell, comrades, may happiness attend your path.’

So saying he vaulted on the back of Shèitan, and rode slowly away in a southerly direction.

It was evident to all the band, from his abstracted air, and the grave melancholy of his voice, that something weighed heavily on his spirits, and they noticed also that although he spoke of going to Cairo, the path he had taken went in the direction precisely opposite.

For an hour he rode slowly forward, revolving in his mind the last words addressed to him by Mr. Thorpe, when, hearing behind him the sound of horses’ feet, he turned and found he was followed



by Abou-Hamed and Abd-hoo, the latter driving a mule laden with saddle-bags containing Hassan's clothes and spare arms.

'What is this?' said Hassan, 'did I not bid you farewell?'

'And did you think,' said Abou-Hamed, in a tone in which indignation almost mastered his habitual respect for his chief, 'that Abd-hoo and I would take your money and leave you thus? What have we done that you should think so meanly of us?'

'Forgive me,' said Hassan, 'I have done you wrong; but my heart was heavy; misfortune hangs over me, and I thought it best to meet my fate alone.'

'Be it misfortune, or prison, or death, we will share it with you,' was the exclamation of Abou-Hamed, echoed by a hearty 'Yes, by Allah!' from the faithful black.

'Be it so,' said Hassan, much affected by their devoted attachment; 'we will part no more.' So saying, he rode once more forward in the same direction as before; but Abou-Hamed, who had, in gaining his point, recovered all his former spirits and energy of character, came up to him, and said, with a comic gravity—

'Hassan, you told us you were going to Cairo;

have you forgotten that the path we are following will take us to Esnah and Assouan ?'

'I know it,' he replied ; 'but before returning to Cairo I wish to see El-Uksor,\* and the wonderful monuments of which I have heard so much. The party of Franks are there, and I must speak to them again before I visit Cairo.'

'There is a Governor at El-Uksor ; will the Franks not betray us to him ?' said Abou-Hamedi, doubtingly.

'Never !' replied Hassan, with something of his former energy. 'Allah has not given them light to dwell in the true faith, but they have hearts open to kindness and friendship.'

How little did Hassan dream while uttering these words that there was one in that Frank party who would willingly have given her life for his, and whose untold and unrequited love was undermining a health, to preserve which the climate of Egypt had been recommended.

We may here mention, in passing, that the band lately commanded by Hassan, dispirited by the loss of a chief who had been the life and soul of every daring enterprise, and anxious to retain,

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\* 'Thebes,' in Upper Egypt, is vulgarly called 'Luxor,' a corruption of its proper Arabic name 'El-Uksor.' The name 'Thebes' is completely unknown to the natives.

without molestation from the Egyptian authorities, the considerable booty which they had amassed, were not long in breaking up, some seeking concealment among the Arabs bordering the desert, and the greater number joining a large caravan of pilgrims returning from Mecca to the west by the route of Cosseir and Keneh.

About a week after the occurrence of these events the Thorpe party were assembled at Thebes, occupying and amusing themselves according to their several tastes and dispositions.

Mr. Thorpe, accompanied by Müller, was busy in copying hieroglyphic inscriptions. At a little distance from them, Emily, seated on a fragment of stone, was sketching the interior of that magnificent temple, whose massive proportions and antique beauty excited the admiration of the Romans eighteen centuries ago; near her was seated Mary Powell, reading a book giving an historical account of the antiquities of Egypt, while Mr. Foyster and Demetri loitered about the ruins, picking up scraps of painted or inscribed stone wherewith to astonish the natives of the civilized world, to which they were longing to return. Mrs. Thorpe, reclining in a portable chair, pored over an idle tale with half-closed eyes, while Dr. Hieronymus was sedulously em-

ployed in making pencil notes on the margin of his Herodotus; Selden was absent on a snipe-shooting excursion.

‘What a picturesque and appropriate addition to this classic scene,’ said Emily, half aloud to herself, as her eye rested upon the figure of a stranger who had just entered the temple from the side, and was looking up, apparently awed and surprised at its gigantic though harmonious proportions.

He was a large, powerful man, considerably above the middle height, although past the meridian of life. His dark eye, still sparkling with the fire of vigorous manhood, belied the age which the massive grey beard descending on his breast might seem to indicate, while the folds of his ample turban, the Cashmere shawl around his waist, in which were two silver-mounted pistols, and the sword that hung at his side, bespoke at once the man of rank and the soldier.

‘Do you know who he is?’ said Emily, addressing Demetri, and transferring at the same time a faithful but rapid sketch of the stranger to her book.

‘Yes, signora,’ replied the loquacious interpreter; ‘though he only arrived here yesterday, I have found out all about him. His name is

Derwish Bey, known as Es-Seyaf, or the Swordsman. He was one of the most celebrated warriors in Mohammed Ali's army of Arabia. He has lately been Governor of Assouan, but is now on his way to Cairo. His boats are gone on, and wait for him at Keneh, to which place he travels on horseback, attended by two or three mounted followers. They say that with that very sword now at his side he has often cut off the head of an ox at a single blow.'

'I hope he will not cut off any of our heads,' replied Emily, smiling.

'Were he to attempt it, lady, you would not be without a defender,' said a low voice, in English, immediately behind her. At the sound of that well-known voice the blood rushed to Emily's temples, as, starting from her seat, and dropping her sketch-book, she turned and saw Hassan before her.

'I beg pardon for having startled you by my sudden appearance,' said Hassan, picking up and presenting her sketch-book, totally unconscious that any feeling, save that of fear, had occasioned her emotion.

'I was, indeed, surprised at your unexpected appearance,' said Emily, recovering herself; 'but you know we are always glad to see you, Hassan.'

Will you come and speak to my father?' and without waiting his reply she led the way to the spot where Mr. Thorpe, with spectacles on nose, was transferring hieroglyphics to his album.

From him, as well as from Müller, Hassan received a friendly welcome, and in a brief conversation which ensued, our hero informed them that he had finally quitted his roving life and his lawless band. Whilst they were still conversing, Derwish Bey approached the party, and observing that Hassan spoke to them in their own language, saluted him, adding,—‘Will you ask the Frank ladies whether one of them has lost a ring?’

Hassan having repeated the question, Emily, looking at her hand, observed that, in the surprise which his sudden appearance had occasioned, a ring had dropped from her finger. ‘Yes,’ she replied, ‘I see that I have lost my small emerald ring.’

‘I have had the good fortune to find it,’ said Derwish Bey, ‘near to the spot where the Khanum was sitting.’ So saying, he handed it to Hassan, who delivered it to the fair owner.

‘Pray express my thanks to him,’ said Emily, with a blush, which might have rewarded a greater service.

In obeying this command, simple as it was, Hassan employed language so correct and courteous, that the Bey's curiosity was excited, and he fixed upon him a glance of keen scrutiny. His eye was met by one frank and fearless as his own; and while the Bey looked with admiration at the noble features and commanding form of the young Bedouin, our hero, on his side, thought that he had never seen the vigour of manhood so happily united to a snowy beard—that object of profound reverence to youth in the East.

It is probable that what was passing in their respective minds was visible on their countenances, for the scrutinizing look gradually relaxed into one of kindlier expression, as they again exchanged salutes on the Bey's retiring from the temple.

No sooner was he gone than Mr. Thorpe asked Hassan if they had ever met before.

'No,' he replied, 'I am only just arrived, and know not who he is.' They then communicated to him the intelligence which Demetri had obtained respecting his name and history.

'What!' exclaimed Hassan, 'is that the famous Derwish, the swordsman? Often have I heard Delì Pasha speak of his gallant feats in Arabia,

and he looks like what they say of him—would that I had met him when he was twenty years younger !’

‘Wherefore, Hassan ?’ inquired Emily, timidly.

‘That I might have proved my sword against his,’ replied Hassan, his eyes flashing as he spoke.

‘Surely, Hassan,’ said Mr. Thorpe, mildly, ‘you could not indulge in hostile feelings towards one who has just rendered us a service, and whose manner and appearance entitle him to respect.’

‘I was wrong, sir,’ replied Hassan, casting his eyes upon the ground, and speaking in a low and melancholy voice ; ‘I should ask pardon for my hasty speech. I have lived so much of late among those who are always engaged in strife that I almost forgot that life has any other occupation. Believe me, that I pay due honour to his white beard, and in the hasty words which I spoke I only meant that I envied him the honourable fame that his sword has obtained for him.’



## CHAPTER X.

AN ARAB LEGEND AND AN UNEXPECTED ENCOUNTER.

OH! the delicious repose of a moonlight November evening at Thebes—who that has once enjoyed can ever forget it? The mild and temperate air; the noble river—the author and nourisher of all the fertility of Egypt—rolling its majestic tide beneath the time-honoured remains of the Temple of Luxor. A mile or two to the northward are seen the yet more ancient and magnificent ruins of Karnak, while at some distance inland, on the opposite banks of the Nile, are dimly discernible the Memnonium, celebrated in classic fable, and the hills, within whose chambered sides repose the ashes of the mighty of olden time—monarchs who had conquered kingdoms, and raised imperishable monuments of architecture and art ere Greece or Rome had emerged from the insignificance of barbarism.

Such was the scene where the Thorpes were assembled on the evening which followed the events related in the last chapter. Hassan was with them, and had already during the day drawn

from Mr. Thorpe a detailed account of the ladies' visit to Amina; and as he heard recounted the deep emotion caused by the mention of his name, hope had once more arisen within his breast—hope that he might yet make that name glorious in some honourable field; and a firm resolve that if he could not win her, she should never again blush at the thought that her affections had been centred on an unworthy object.

Near him sat Emily; and fain would we draw a veil over the feelings which dwelt within her breast, for if there be on earth an object more worthy of compassion than another it is a sensitive and kindly heart, one formed by nature to bless and to be blest, wasting its virgin affections in the dream of an unrequited love. Emily had never dared to probe the depths of her own heart, or her pride might have saved her. She knew of Amina's attachment to Hassan, and she knew that it was returned; and yet she dreamt on, unconscious that her own feelings towards him had a deeper source than a just admiration of his high and heroic qualities.

There, too, sat Derwish Bey, who had deferred his departure till the following day, and had courteously accepted Mr. Thorpe's invitation to take a cup of coffee with their party. None of

them failed to observe how often, and with how scrutinizing a glance his eye rested upon Hassan, and Mr. Thorpe felt convinced that the ex-Governor either had learnt or suspected that the young Bedouin before him was no other than Hassan, the far-famed outlaw. Upon Mr. Thorpe's hinting as much to Hassan, he replied with a smile—

‘If it be so, there is no harm. Derwish Bey is a brave soldier, not a spy or informer.’

Müller was the first to break the meditative silence which had insensibly crept over the whole party, which he did by commencing with Mr. Thorpe a conversation concerning the original founders of the magnificent fabrics around them, the Romans who succeeded them, and then again the conquering Arabs by whom the Roman or rather the Greek empire had been destroyed.

On all these subjects the mind of Müller was a storehouse of information, especially respecting the early history and literature of the Arabs, to which he had devoted much study.

There was no little originality and eloquence in his language as he explained his theory that the chivalry, which was during several centuries the boast of Europe and its bulwark against the Paynim, was itself of Arabic origin, as certainly as that the most celebrated colleges of Europe,

during the earlier portion of the Middle Ages, had imbibed their knowledge and science from the Arab fountains in Andalusia.

There were some parts of this theory which Mr. Thorpe felt much disposed to combat, especially that relating to chivalry, and he frankly stated his objections, saying—‘I do not see how it is possible that an institution, the very cornerstone of which is a profound respect for women, and a defence of her honour and her rights, can have originated in a nation which has always considered her as an inferior being, and degraded her by polygamy.’

‘I grant you,’ replied Müller, ‘that the polygamy permitted by the Koran, and countenanced by the example of the Prophet Mohammed, has in subsequent ages, and especially among the wealthy nobles and princes of Turkey and Asia, produced the effect which you describe ; but such was not the practice of the early Arabs, who mostly restricted themselves to one wife, and whose chivalrous devotion to the fair sex was the favourite theme of every ancient poem and song. What say you, Hassan,’ continued Müller, addressing our hero, ‘you know well the legends of the Arabs ?’

‘I am too young and ignorant,’ replied Hassan, ‘to give an opinion on matters of religion, or to

explain why the Prophet permitted his followers to lock up fifty women in the harem of one man. I do not understand it any more than I do what I have been told of the religion of the Franks in Italy and France, where they think it right to lock up for life, in prisons called convents, fifty or a hundred maidens who have committed no crime. I do not pretend to explain these things, that is the work of the priest and of the learned ; but if you say that in our oldest Arab legends, honour and glory are given to those who defended woman against oppression, and whose love was proof against every trial, you speak only truth ; so it was among our forefathers, and so it must be in every land where there is a warrior's arm to strike, and a poet's voice to sing.'

As he uttered these words a glow of enthusiasm lighted up his eyes ; Emily cast hers towards the ground, and she felt her heart beat quicker ; while Müller and Thorpe interchanged a look which seemed to say, ' Are there not in that youth the germs of the poet and the warrior, were there only a field for their development ?'

' Hassan,' said Müller, after a brief pause, ' do you remember that once on the river, last year, you recited to us a legend on the death of Rabîah which afforded great interest to all the party ;

could you not now recite us another on the subject of which we have just spoken? It will please Mr. Thorpe, and convince him of the truth of what we have said.'

'It is now some time since I heard the tales of the *ràwi*, and I fear that I may have forgotten them,' replied Hassan, musing, 'but there is one concerning that same Rabîah in his early youth, which I once knew; I will try if I can remember it.'

Thus saying he rose, and retiring to a little distance, strode up and down, recalling to memory the legend in question. While he was thus employed, Müller explained to Derwish Bey the purport of the conversation which had just passed, and that Hassan was about to recite an Arab tale.

'Is that youth a *ràwi*?' said Derwish Bey, with evident surprise.

'You shall hear,' replied Müller; 'I know not whether he only recites what he has heard, or whether the language is partly his own, but, as it is in Arabic, you will have the advantage of my English friends, to whom I am obliged to translate it.'

After a short time Hassan returned and recited the legend of El-Akram, which (being translated) ran as follows :—

‘It is related by Abou-Obediah that Douraid, the son of Simmah, a young chief of the Keisaylan tribe, in the Hedjaz, having gone with a band of horsemen against the Benou-Kinânah, reached a valley in their territory called El-Akram, and saw at a distance a youth leading a camel, on which a maiden was seated.

‘Gallop after them,’ cried Douraid to one of his cavaliers, ‘and bid him give up his camel and his lady, and depart himself.’

‘The horseman having reached the spot, summoned the youth in the words of Douraid. The stranger, without exhibiting the least emotion, gave the bridle into the hands of his fair companion, addressing her thus:—

‘Pursue thy course leisurely, move on with the gait of a fair and tranquil one, whose rounded proportions have been cast in the mould of security, whose heart has never beat from fear. To turn my back to this enemy would be ineffaceable disgrace. Be witness, then, of the greeting with which I salute him.’

‘He then charged the horseman, and with one stroke of his lance hurled him dead from the saddle; then presenting the horse to his lady, continued his route.

‘Douraid seeing that his horseman did not return, sent off another with orders similar to the former: the cavalier finding his companion dead

on the road, followed it till he overtook the youth, whom he ordered to surrender his camel and his lady;—a second time he placed the bridle in her hands, and confronting his adversary, uttered these verses :—

‘Let my lady pass free and inviolate,  
For Rabîah is between her and thee;  
Rabîah, whose flexible lance is from Khatt-hadjar,  
Thou shalt prove that it strikes not in vain.’

‘So saying he transfixed and killed him.

‘Douraid seeing that his two horsemen returned not, sent a third, whom Rabîah slew likewise, after repeating the following verses :—

‘Canst thou read hope in my stern countenance?  
Seest thou not thy companions dead on the path?  
They fell by the lance which now strikes thee.’

‘In this third encounter Rabîah’s lance was broken.

‘Douraid, astonished at the prolonged absence of his horsemen, now pursued the youth himself. After passing the three dead bodies, he came up with Rabîah, walking quietly by his lady’s camel with his broken lance in his hand; at this sight, filled with a generous admiration, he cried aloud—

‘“O warrior! ’twere a sin to kill a man like thee; but my horsemen are abroad in all direc-



tions, and I see thee so young, and without a lance ; here, take mine, and I will hasten back to deter my men from pursuing thee.'

'When he rejoined his band he said—'The warrior has well protected his lady,—he has killed three of my horsemen, and now he has my lance ; he is one whom we must not think of attacking.' These are the verses which Douraid then composed in honour of Rabîah, whose name he knew not :—

'I never saw his equal, nor ever heard of so brave a defender of his lady.

He is one whom it were a shame to overcome by numbers.

Having slain three horsemen of approved valour

He pursues his path as if he had found no obstacle.

A smile is on his lip, his forehead frank and open ;

The brightness of a polished blade beams on his face.

What would I not give to know who were his parents ?

He is a warrior whose name should not remain unknown.' '

The voice of Hassan, which had been clear and sonorous as a trumpet, while he recited the feats of Rabîah, sunk to a tone of deep melancholy as he repeated the last verses, so applicable to his own fate ; but revived and encouraged by the hearty and repeated 'Aferin, aferin !' (bravo, bravo) of Derwish Bey, he continued his recital.

'Such was the day of El-Akram. Many years afterwards Douraid was taken prisoner in a

skirmish by the Benou-Kinânah, and they were about to kill him, when a woman sprung from the crowd, crying aloud, 'Touch him not, he is my prisoner.' So saying, she threw her long veil over him.

'Who art thou,' said he, 'who protectest me?'

'I am,' she replied, 'Raitah, the sister of Rabîah, who fell at the Horseman's Gap. Rememberest thou the day of El-Akram, when thou didst spare his life when his lance was broken, and thou didst give him thine own?'

'The tribe held a council, and allowed her claim; so she furnished him with clothes and arms, and sent him back to his people. From that day there was peace between Douraid and the tribe of Rabîah.'

Loud and long were the plaudits bestowed by Derwish Bey and Müller on Hassan's recital of a tale, which loses in translation all the effect that it derived from the simple beauty of its language and the energy and varied intonation of the narrator. Müller gave a faithful version of it to the Thorpes, who joined in the applause so heartily bestowed on it by those who could understand the original.

'It is a good old legend,' said Hassan, modestly; 'but you should have heard it from

the lips of old Abd-en-Nebbi, the Hedjaz Ràwi ! For myself, I like the tale of the Horseman's Gap better.'

'And why so?' inquired Mr. Thorpe.

'Because,' he replied, 'in this tale Rabâh fought to defend his lady—any one could do that, with love and hope to nerve his arm ; but in the other tale he died to save her ; yet would she not live without him—they slept together in death. Happy death ! oh, how much better than life !'

These last words he said rather musing aloud to himself than addressing them to any one ; then suddenly rising, and giving a general good-night salutation to the party, he retired, and not a word was spoken until his retreating figure was lost behind the dusky shadows of the temple of Luxor.

Emily's heart fluttered within her, under emotions which she could not define ; and when Müller explained to Derwish Bey the last words which Hassan had used before his sudden disappearance, the old soldier muttered to himself in Turkish, 'A brave youth—the old story—he is in love ; but with whom ? And can this be the outlaw, of whose deeds of lawless daring I have heard so much ?'

He could easily have satisfied his curiosity by inquiring of the Thorpes whether the report which he had heard from one of his attendants was correct ; but he had too much of nature's nobility in him to do so, for he felt that it might involve a breach of confidence. He repressed his curiosity, and after thanking the Thorpes for their courtesy, and informing them that on the morrow he meant to continue his way to Keneh, he took his leave.

On the following morning, Abou-Hamedi, who had been absent the greater part of the night, reported to Hassan that he had obtained information of a band of thieves in the neighbourhood who seemed to have evil intentions towards Derwish Bey. He had accidentally fallen in with one of these fellows at a small coffee-house in the village of Luxor, and suspecting from some casual expressions that he belonged to some band in the neighbourhood who meant mischief, he plied him so well with arrack and the intoxicating drug called hashish, that he was able to draw from the man the following particulars :—

He was associated with a body of thieves and moharrabin, the latter of whom had escaped from the conscription lately issued in Upper Egypt for the levy of troops to march into

Sennaar. Several of these fellows had been flogged for insubordination by Derwish Bey, who was a severe disciplinarian, and having ascertained that he was now travelling down to Keneh on horseback, with only a few followers, the greater part of his suite being on board his boats, they had laid a plot to waylay and rob him in some unfrequented part of the road. Abou-Hamedi encouraged his tipsy friend to believe that he highly approved the scheme, and hoped to participate in its execution.

Hassan lost no time in returning to Luxor (he himself having preferred remaining at the small hamlet to the south of Karnak), in order to put Derwish Bey on his guard, and was disappointed at finding that the old soldier had started at day-break, and was already some miles on his way.

Hassan resolved to follow him immediately, but, before doing so, he called on Mr. Thorpe, and having informed him of the intelligence that he had received, recommended him to communicate it without delay to the Governor of Luxor, and to have the guards doubled for the protection of his own dahabiàhs, lest the predatory band should be tempted to pay him a visit.

Mr. Thorpe thanked him for his warning, and placed in his hands a letter, which he requested

that he would find means to deliver to the Viceroy's interpreter; a commission which Hassan promised to fulfil. He was not aware that it contained an account of the attack made upon his boats by Abou-Hashem's band, and of the manner in which his party and his property had been rescued by Hassan at the imminent risk of his life. Our hero was so anxious to overtake Derwish Bey, and to warn him of the plot laid by the moharrabin, that he declined therefreshments offered by the Thorpes, and bidding them a hasty, but cordial farewell, galloped off in the direction of Keneh.

Meanwhile, Derwish Bey, unsuspecting of any danger, passed the ruins of Karnak, and continued his course leisurely to the northward, intending to reach at nightfall a small village called Solemieh, which belonged to him, and the rents of which had fallen somewhat in arrear. He was accompanied only by his khaznadar, his chibouqchi, two armed servants, and a couple of sàises, who looked after his baggage-mules, which were three in number.

He had journeyed about ten miles, and was crossing a desert plain, on which no human habitation was visible, and where the neglected soil produced nothing but that rank mixture of

tall weeds called in Egypt khalfah. His thoughts were dwelling on his unexpected meeting with the Frank party at Luxor; and, more than all, on the young Bedouin, whose remarkable appearance and qualities had strongly excited his interest. That the latter was, indeed, the formidable outlaw of whom he had heard so much he had no longer any doubt; and yet, instead of the fierce, rough bandit whom he had pictured to himself, he had found a gentle-mannered, noble-looking youth, speaking the language of the Franks, and evidently esteemed by them; one, moreover, the characteristic expression of whose countenance seemed to be a thoughtful melancholy, and whose taste for poetry and conversation seemed totally at variance with the deeds of lawless violence and daring attributed to him by report.

Whilst he was riding slowly on, musing on these things with an interest which he could scarcely explain to himself, his khaznadar rode up, and called his attention to a party of about twenty men who were approaching, and whose appearance was anything but re-assuring to the traveller. They were a strangely-assorted band, half on horseback, half on foot, some armed with guns, some with lances, and all with swords, of

different fashion. From the weather-stained and tattered remains of uniform still visible in the attire of some of the party, the experienced eye of Derwish Bey recognised them at once as moharrabin, men who, as they rob and plunder with a halter round their necks, are generally the most cruel and bloodthirsty of lawless bands.

Derwish Bey lost not a moment in ordering his small party to get ready their swords and pistols, and as the robbers drew near, he called out to inquire what they wanted. The only reply was a musket-ball, which passed close by his cheek.

Regardless of the disproportion of numbers, the brave old soldier struck his stirrups into his horse's flanks, and, followed by his attendants, charged full at the centre of the band. So well did he wield his once-renowned sword, that several had already fallen victims to its edge, when an unlucky ball entered the eye of his horse, which reared and fell on its side. In vain did the stout old soldier struggle to withdraw his leg from the carcase of the dead horse which pinned it to the ground, but his right arm was free, and he still continued to ward off the cuts which one or two of the cowardly miscreants on foot were making at his head.

At this moment a black steed passed like a



meteor by the fallen Bey, while a single groan announced the fate of one of those who had been cutting at him. Again the black horse wheeled and was at his side, and the second robber fell dead by his companion.

Then it was that the Bey first caught sight of the rider's face, but changed indeed from what he had seen on the preceding day ; for now the angry veins swelled on the brow, fire darted from the flashing eyes, and the sweep of the vengeful arm was like a tempest. Again and again did he charge among the astonished banditti, shouting and dealing his terrible blows, each of which bore with it a life or a limb. Cuts and bullets were aimed at him during his headlong course, but still he fell not, and it seemed as if he were proof against lead or steel.

His impetuosity had carried him to some distance from the prostrate Bey, when, turning his eye on that quarter, he saw that again several of the miscreants on foot were approaching to despatch him. Shouting aloud his war-cry of ' Hassan Ebn-Heram,' in a voice that rose high above the din of the conflict, he dashed his stirrups into Shèitan's flank, and in a few bounds was again beside the fallen chief.

For a second the sound of that dreaded name seemed to paralyse every arm, and Hassan had

time to throw himself from his panting horse and to cover with his own person, and with his sweeping sword, the helpless form of the prostrate Bey.

Indignant at being foiled by a single man, they now crowded around him, and had he not fortunately succeeded in snatching from one of the robbers a round shield of hippopotamus hide, such as is used by the natives of Soudan, he must soon have fallen beneath the blows aimed at him from so many quarters. As it was, he fought like a lion at bay, and though wounded in several places, he was still maintaining the unequal contest when Abou-Hamedi and Abd-hoo, who had been unable to keep up with the furious speed at which Shèitan had borne his impetuous rider, now appeared on the scene. Two of the ruffians, who were attacking Hassan, fell at once beneath the swords of his faithful followers, and the remainder, astonished and disheartened at this unexpected reinforcement, slowly retired.

Hassan now vaulted once more on the back of Shèitan, who was refreshed by the short breathing time which his rider's conflict on foot had allowed him, and again shouting his war-cry, charged the hesitating band, accompanied by his two fresh and stout attendants.

The robbers, not knowing how many more of Hassan's followers might be approaching, awaited not the charge, but fled as fast as their legs and horses could carry them. Several were killed and wounded by Abou-Hamedi and Abd-hoo, and two they seized and brought back prisoners. While they were thus engaged, Hassan returned to Derwish Bey, and exerted all that remained of his fast-failing strength in extricating him from the carcase of the dead horse, an object which he had scarcely succeeded in effecting ere he sunk down beside him, faint and exhausted from loss of blood.

A happy smile passed over his features as he observed that the brave old soldier was altogether unhurt; and the latter, with the ready presence of mind gained in many a former fight, wasted not a moment in thanking his deliverer, but busied himself at once in examining and binding up his wounds.

The worst of these proved to be two deep sabre cuts, one in the side and another in the thigh. These he carefully closed and bound, and then he observed that blood was still trickling down his chest, from a cut between the neck and shoulder blade. While engaged in staunching and dressing this his eye fell upon the amulet which Hassan

wore round his neck, and the trembling hand of the veteran was scarcely able to accomplish the task, ere he whispered with a faltering tone—

‘ Hassan, whence got you that amulet ?’

‘ It was on my neck when I was left an infant on the base of the Pyramid,’ replied Hassan, in a faint voice.

‘ My son ! my son !’ ejaculated the old soldier, in a voice in which joy, and fear, and tenderness were strangely blended.

‘ Father ! father ! Allah be praised and thanked that I have found thee, if it be only to die on thy breast,’ murmured Hassan, as he threw his arms round the veteran’s neck and fainted.

‘ Thou shalt not die, my beloved, my gallant boy,’ said the Bey, almost fiercely. ‘ And yet,’ he added, in a softened tone, as a tear trickled down his weather-beaten cheek and fell on the unconscious form of Hassan, ‘ by Allah ! and by my father’s grave, wert thou now to die, I would not change thee for the proudest and noblest of the living.’\*

They then laid him gently on the ground, and Abou-Hamedi brought water from a neighbouring

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\* Derwish Bey had never heard of the ‘ gallant Ormond ;’ but the feelings and instincts of parental love are in all ages and climes alike.

creek, which they sprinkled on his forehead, while Derwish Bey produced from one of his saddle-bags a small phial containing a cordial, which he always carried with him on his journeys, and a few drops of which soon restored Hassan to consciousness.

‘ Was it a dream? Father! father!’ were the first words he uttered. Again he was reposing on the veteran’s breast. The instincts of nature spoke within them more eloquently than words, and for many seconds the old soldier looked down in silence on the pale and upturned face of his son with a touching tenderness, which almost melted to tears the rugged nature of Abou-Hamedi himself.

His was not a disposition, however, to allow him to remain long inactive when action was required. Beckoning to Abd-hoo to assist him, he collected the mules, which had strayed to some distance, but which the robbers in their hasty flight had not had time to drive away, and he placed on them the Bey’s khaznadar and chibouqchi who were both severely wounded, then he carefully reloaded his pistols, and made Abd-hoo do the same, with a significant hint to the two prisoners, that if they attempted to escape, their brains should be blown out. Having made these

dispositions, he came up to the Bey, and whispered to him—

‘ Excellency, we must lose no time in returning to Luxor; Hassan, and the only two of your followers who survive, are badly wounded; the Franks have always plenty of medicines, and that Müller is a skilful hakim; let us place Hassan on my horse, and Abd-hoo, who is as strong as any horse, will walk beside his saddle and support him. You can ride Abd-hoo’s horse and watch the prisoners, while I follow on foot and look after the mules.’

Derwish Bey, who had now somewhat recovered his composure, saw that the advice was good, and followed it with the readiness of an old campaigner. The *cortége* having been organized as Abou-Hamedi suggested, and Hassan having been gently lifted into the saddle, where his half-inanimate form was supported by the powerful arm of Abd-hoo, they set out on their return, Abou-Hamedi bringing up the rear, and leading the faithful Shèitan, who, like his master, was badly wounded, but fortunately not disabled. In this guise they returned slowly, but without accident to Luxor, where their arrival produced a sensation more easily imagined than described.

Müller’s surgical practice and readiness of

resource were now productive of the best results. His own bed was given up to Hassan, whose wounds were now skilfully dressed, and who soon fell asleep, although the murmured words of 'Father,' 'Shèitan,' and 'Amina,' which escaped his lips, proved that his wandering thoughts were busy with the past, and that a fever crisis was yet to be feared.

That evening, after the wounds of all the sufferers had been dressed, and every arrangement made for their comfort, Derwish Bey related to the Thorpes the strange accident by which he had recognised his long-lost son, and the heroic gallantry with which he had defended an unknown father's life against such overwhelming numbers. Tears started to every eye as the veteran concluded his narrative, and poor Emily retired to her cabin to bless and to pray for the secret idol of her heart's worship.

## CHAPTER XI.

HASSAN'S RECOVERY—HE AND HIS FATHER BID ADIEU TO THE THORPES, AND RETURN TO CAIRO—DERWISH BEY VISITS THE VICEROY, AND HASSAN RECEIVES THE VISITS OF SEVERAL OLD ACQUAINTANCES.

ON the following day the Governor of Luxor, who was only a colonel, and consequently of inferior rank to Derwish Bey, went out by desire of the latter with a party of soldiers and fellahs to the scene of conflict, in order to bury the dead. They were guided by Abou-Hamedi, who easily recognised and pointed out the spot where the Bey's horse had fallen upon its side, the rider having been unable to withdraw his leg from its pressure. There still lay the horse, and around it seven dead bodies of the thieves attested the desperate valour with which Hassan had defended the fallen Bey.

One in particular was pointed out to the soldiers and astonished villagers by Abou-Hamedi as having been marked by Hassan's sword. The man had worn a large turban of voluminous folds plaited over a thick cap of felt; the sword had passed through cap and turban, then through the



skull below, dividing the head down to the jaws. The spectators shuddered at the ghastly object, and for many years afterwards 'Hassan's cut' was familiarly spoken of in the neighbourhood.

Abou-Hamedi, far from shuddering, viewed it with so much admiration, that he failed not to recount it to Derwish Bey, who received it with a 'Mashallah!' in which the pride of the old soldier was plainly discernible. As for him, he scarcely ever left the side of his son's bed, tending and watching him with an anxious solicitude, such as none but the parent of an only child can know.

A very short time had elapsed ere Müller was able to assure him that the youth and vigour of the patient's constitution had triumphed over all dangerous symptoms. His strength was prostrated by great loss of blood; but this very circumstance saved him from the fever which had threatened to result from his severe wounds. He learned with grateful pleasure that his faithful Shèitan had come in for his share of the attendance of the indefatigable Müller, who had sewed up the sabre-cuts, and successfully extracted two balls, which the gallant horse had received in the affray.

As soon as Hassan was able to sit up, an easy-chair was placed for him in the open air by his attached English friends, and there he might be seen daily sitting with his father beside him, each looking upon the other with an affection too deep for words—an affection that seemed as if it were endeavouring by its intensity to make amends for the long separation to which they had been exposed by Fate.

This new and blessed sensation of filial love, and the happy feeling that he had been the fortunate instrument of saving that honoured parent's life, gave to Hassan's mind a contented repose to which it had long been a stranger; he felt that now he had not lived in vain, and hope whispered to him that the son of Derwish Bey might aspire without presumption to the hand of Amina.

These sensations were not without their corresponding effect upon his outward demeanour, and his former impetuosity had given place to a gentleness that won the hearts of all around him. He was so grateful for every attention, that it was quite a pleasure to Mary Powell to carry him his cup of broth or tea, in order that she might hear how kindly he thanked her; and Mr. Foyster spitefully declared that she frequently carried him

things that he did not require, just that she might show her pretty face to the interesting invalid.

And how fared it during this time with Emily? Alas ! her own heart had spoken to her of late so plainly that she could no longer misconstrue or silence its secret speech. What she had thought to be only admiration for a bold and noble character, she now found to be love for one who had every quality to win and deserve it. It was in vain that reason whispered to her the absurdity of bestowing her affection on one of another race and creed, and one who, moreover, did not seek or return it ; the evil was done, and all that remained for Emily was to summon to her aid her maiden pride, and to strive therewith to conceal, if she were not able to expel from her heart the image so fatal to its peace ; this she did with a patient and unrewarded heroism such as woman only can exhibit, and if the painful struggle preyed upon her health and spirits, it strengthened her character, by substituting an habitual self-control for those romantic impulses in which she had before indulged.

Hassan, the unconscious cause of these contending emotions, was in the meantime gradually recovering his health and strength, and during the hours of his convalescence listened with eager

interest to the history of his father's fortunes ; a brief abstract of which we will now subjoin for the reader's information.

It was about seventeen years before the opening of our tale that Selim Aga, a young man of good birth and connections in Constantinople, being a son of a former Governor of Damascus, came to Egypt in the train of the chief eunuch, who had been despatched, with a numerous and honourable suite, as bearer of a diamond-hilted sword and other valuable presents from the Sultan to Mohammed Ali ; the chief object of his mission being to incite the warlike Governor of Egypt to undertake an expedition against the Wahabees, who were then threatening to subvert the Imperial power in Arabia. In the suite of the chief eunuch there were also Ingòu Khanum, a young lady of high rank, who had been betrothed to Mustapha Bey, the Viceroy's brother-in-law, and her younger sister, for whom the chief eunuch proposed to find an honourable alliance in the Viceregal family. But by one of those accidents which occur in voyages, the latter saw Selim Aga, and they fell in love with each other.

She contrived to escape from the harem to which she had been brought in Cairo, flew to the arms of her lover, who married her secretly, and

conveyed her to a house which he had taken for the purpose in Ghizeh.

The rage of the chief eunuch knew no bounds. All Cairo was searched, but in vain ; her disguise as an Egyptian woman, residing in an humble cottage at Ghizeh, protected her for a time, and the chief eunuch returned to Constantinople without having been able to discover her retreat.

The young couple lived for some time happily in their retirement ; Selim Aga continuing to serve the Viceroy in Cairo, and visiting his wife by stealth. It seems, however, that some one who entertained a spite against him discovered his secret, and orders were given for the immediate seizure of his wife and himself ; he fortunately received notice of this order in time to hasten to his cottage at Ghizeh, and warn his wife of their perilous situation.

Not a moment was to be lost ; disguised as a Fellah she sought and found refuge in the house of a kind-hearted neighbour, whilst he, snatching up their only child, with a few articles of value that he could secrete about his person, galloped off to the desert, and placed his child, in the manner already known to the reader, in the hands of an Arab woman, whom he found seated at the base of the Great Pyramid. Thence he fled towards

Lower Egypt as fast and as far as his horse could carry him. In the neighbourhood of Alexandria he threw off his Turkish dress, having procured and assumed that of a wandering derwish.

When his beard and his hair had become sufficiently long and matted, and his face sufficiently stained to ensure him against recognition, he ventured to return to Cairo, in order to inquire into the fate of his wife, but all his researches proved unavailing, although he had the satisfaction of learning that she had eluded the search of those who were ordered to seize her.

Still habited and disguised as a derwish, he found his way, with a caravan of pilgrims, to Mecca, and thence, following the bent of his early habits and predilections, went and joined the army of Ibrahim Pasha, then engaged in hostilities with the Wahabees.

On one occasion, when Ibrahim was nearly surrounded, and hard pressed by a body of the enemy, he was surprised by hearing beside him the loud shout of a Derwish ('Allah-hoo! Allah-hoo!') who, armed with an enormous club, garnished with iron spikes, came forward to the rescue. Horse and man went down before the sweeping blows of the Derwish's terrible weapon.

Apparently reckless of life, he went forward, striking to the right and the left, and shouting 'Allah-hoo!' in a voice that terrified the Arabs, who, thinking that he must be a jinn or afreet, fled before him like sheep. When the battle was over, Ibrahim sent for him to his tent, and inquired what he could do to reward him.

'Give me a horse and a sword,' was the reply of the Derwish; 'I ask no more.'

'That you shall have,' replied Ibrahim; 'and, Wallah! if thou canst use a sword as thou dost handle that knotty club, it will not be long before thou dost attain to honour and distinction.'

The horse and the sword were given, and in every succeeding action the Derwish, still clothed in the same wild attire, was in the foremost ranks, shouting 'Allah-hoo!' and striking down all before him. Such was his skill in the use of the sword that he was soon known in the Egyptian army as Derwish the Swordsman, and although, as he rose in rank, he laid aside the mendicant dress and resumed that of an officer, he never thought fit to resume his original name, but retained that under which, by his valour and good conduct, he had attained the rank of Bey. He had the rare good fortune to be equally a favourite with Mohammed Ali and Ibrahim, and as he

never mixed in any political intrigues, but simply did his duty as a brave soldier, he had succeeded in retaining the favour of both.

Such is an abstract of the eventful career of Hassan's father, although we, as faithful chroniclers, have related it in language which he would have been too modest to use when speaking in the first person.

'And have you never succeeded in learning what became of my mother?' inquired Hassan, when the veteran had concluded his narrative.

'Never,' he replied; 'I learnt indeed that she visited her sister in disguise, who received her kindly, and procured for her, under a feigned name, an honourable asylum in the harem of one of our Pashas; but her sister is dead, and her secret died with her, unless, indeed, it be known to an old woman who was her favourite slave, and whom, if she be yet alive, I will try to find in Cairo.'

'Inshallah!' ejaculated Hassan, earnestly, 'may we find her.'

It now came to be his turn to relate to his father the incidents of his own brief, but eventful life; which he did with the unassuming simplicity and truthfulness natural to his character; and if he passed slightly over those which did him most



honour, a father's partiality supplied the omissions. He made no secret of his attachment to Amina, or of the circumstances under which it had been fostered, and renewed hope arose in his breast when he found that his father and Delî Pasha were old companions in arms, and intimate friends.

Hassan's impatience to reach Cairo, nourished as it was by the hope of seeing Amina and tracing his mother, became now so great that Derwish Bey could not long resist it; but before setting out he determined, with the usual energy of his nature, to break up the band of thieves by whom he had been attacked, and who, notwithstanding the severe loss they had sustained, might still be sufficiently strong to do much mischief in the neighbourhood.

A liberal application of the stick to the two who had been captured soon induced them to betray the habitual rendezvous of the band, and Derwish Bey, accompanied by the Governor and a party of fifty horsemen, having made a rapid night march to the indicated spot, came upon them at dawn so unexpectedly that they had not time to make an effectual resistance or escape. A few were killed, and the greater part of the remainder were led back prisoners to Luxor,

whence they were forwarded under a guard to Cairo,—the galleys at Alexandria being their ultimate destination.

Having accomplished this task, Derwish Bey no longer resisted the urgent entreaties of Hassan that he should proceed to Cairo without delay. Mr. Thorpe having brought up with him two tents, which were pitched on the river-bank, and sufficed for the accommodation of Dr. Moss, Selden, and Müller, he was able, without inconvenience, to lend his smaller dahabiàh to convey Derwish Bey to Keneh, where his own boats awaited him. It was agreed that Abd-hoo should accompany Hassan, while Abou-Hamedi led Shèitan by slow and easy stages to the capital.

Before leaving his kind English friends, Derwish Bey testified his gratitude for the care and attention which they had shown to Hassan by presenting them with two curious relics which he happened to have with him, and which Hassan assured him would afford them the greatest pleasure.

To Mr. Thorpe he gave a very fine antique scarabæus, attached by a gold chain to a ring of the same metal, with a hieroglyphic inscription; it had been found near Assouan, and though only of the Ptolemaic date, was a very fine specimen. To Müller he gave a very old MS. of the New Testa-

ment, found in a ruined Coptic convent in the Said; one half the page was written in Coptic and the other half in Greek: the veteran could read neither the one nor the other, but to Müller the volume was a great prize.

When the hour of leave-taking arrived, Hassan shook hands with all the party, after the English fashion, thanking Mr. Thorpe and Müller for all their kindness during his illness, in few but feeling words; when he took Emily's hand to bid her good-bye, he started, for it was icy cold, her face was deadly pale, but she had summoned all her resolution for the trying hour, and nothing save a slight quivering of the lip betrayed her emotion as she said in a low voice, 'Good-bye, Hassan.'

'Allah bless you and send you happiness!' said Hassan, and then turning to Müller he added in Arabic, 'My kind hakim, take care of the young lady, she seems suffering in health, more so than last year, and she is so good and gentle that she deserves all your care.'

'I will do my best,' said Müller, doubtfully; 'but my skill does not avail for her complaint. Allah and time must cure it.'

Derwish Bey, who had followed close by Hassan in his leave-taking, now preceded him into the dahabiàh, and amidst renewed waving of

handkerchiefs and good-byes, she slowly descended the stream.

Who is that in the after-cabin of the large dahabiàh, who is peering with strained eyeballs through the Venetian blinds to get the last look of the receding figure of Hassan? The cabin door is locked,—her hands are now clasped together,—now pressed upon her throbbing temples.

‘Allah bless you and send you happiness!—these were his last words,’ she murmured; ‘yes, his very last, and I shall never hear that voice again! Happiness! happiness!—and yet he spoke it not in mockery; his tongue is too true, his heart is too gentle for that! He is gone,—no, not yet;—that is his proud figure by the steersman;—yes, he is gone;—where?—where loving eyes and loving lips await his coming; whilst I, sad and desolate, curse the day that——. No, no; Father in Heaven have mercy and forgive me. Bless him—bless them together.’

Here, as the unhappy girl fell upon her knees, a flood of tears came to her relief, the throbbing of her heart and brow subsided by degrees, and ere she left her cabin she had resolved that this should be the last victory that her unrequited passion should gain over her self-control.

While Emily had been thus giving vent to her

anguish in the solitude of her cabin, Mr. Foyster and Mary Powell were walking side by side on the banks of the river.

‘Miss Mary,’ said the butler to his companion, with an air of offended dignity, ‘I observed that when Hassan wished you good-bye, and thanked you for your kind attendance upon him during his illness, you looked up in his face as if he were a cynosure.’

‘And pray what is a cynosure, Mr. Foyster?’ said Mary, demurely.

‘I have heard Dr. Moss explain to Mr. Selden,’ replied the butler, ‘that it is a wonderful thing described by Virgil, which those who once look upon can’t take their eyes off.’

‘Dr. Moss is a fool, and, for aught I know, Virgil was a fool, and you are no better yourself,’ said Mary, tossing her head.

‘But, Miss Mary,’ said the jealous and incensed butler, ‘I noticed also that when he said good-bye, you turned up those red, pouting lips of yours towards his face as if to invite him to take a kiss;—I was astonished at your imperance.’

‘Imperance yourself,’ rejoined Mary, losing all patience; ‘and if I were to say that I would rather have a kiss from Hassan’s lips than a score of fusty compliments from yours, I should only

tell you the truth ; so you may put that in your pipe and smoke it, Mr. Foyster.'

So saying, and without vouchsafing him another word or look, the indignant Abigail left the discomfited butler, and returned to the boat. From this short scene the reader may gather how much Mary had gained, and the butler had lost, during a year's travel in the East.

Meanwhile Derwish Bey and Hassan accomplished the voyage to Cairo without accident worthy of record, and proceeded at once to a fine old house belonging to the Bey, situated near the centre of the city, adjoining the Birket-el-Fil, or the 'Lake of the Elephant.'

The old soldier, knowing the severity of Mohammed Ali in all cases where his authority had been publicly braved, hastened to the Viceroy's presence to explain to him the strange circumstances under which he had recovered his long-lost son, and to solicit a full pardon of the latter's offences against the laws in Upper Egypt ; he delivered also to the interpreter the letter written by Müller, which was forthwith read to the Viceroy. Mohammed Ali, who had listened with grave attention to all the arguments adduced by Derwish Bey, and to the contents of the letter, said—

‘ Derwish, you know how highly I regard your services, and your long-trying fidelity, and how willingly I would grant any request of yours. I rejoice, also, that you have recovered a son who is, in many respects, so well worthy of you ; for I confess to you that I took a great liking to the lad, and our good hakim here is always speaking in his favour. I own that I owe him a debt for saving your life, my faithful old comrade, when he did not know that you were his father.’

So far Mohammed Ali spoke in a kind and friendly tone; he added, with somewhat of severity in his manner, ‘ But, Derwish, you must not forget that Hassan for some time openly defied my authority, and I am bound to listen to the complaints of the villagers and caravans who were plundered by his band ; such deeds cannot go unpunished while I rule in Egypt ; the government of the interior I entrust to the Kiahia Pasha, and I must consult with him before coming to a decision. Meanwhile, go to your home, and consider Hassan as being under arrest in your house ; you are answerable for his appearance when required, and I will cause the orders issued for his apprehension to be cancelled. For the present be satisfied with this ; now you may retire, and Allah be with you !’

Derwish Bey well knew from the tone in which these words were spoken that all further appeal at the time was unavailing, so, with a respectful salaam to the Viceroy, he withdrew, and returned home to report to Hassan the result of his interview.

Our hero was by no means discouraged thereby, for he saw that, in many respects, he stood high in the Viceroy's opinion, and he felt tolerably sure that both in Delì Pasha and in the Kiahia himself he would find advocates of his cause. On the latter subject his mind was soon made easy by his old friend and comrade, Reschid, who no sooner heard of his arrival in Cairo than he hastened to him, and embraced him heartily.

‘Mashallah!’ said Reschid, gazing at Hassan, whose countenance was bronzed, and his figure developed by a year passed in constant exercise and exposure; ‘I left you a lion and I find you an elephant. By the life of the Prophet, Hassan, I have often secretly envied your Bedouin life; I laughed heartily, and I can tell you that my Pasha, in his private room, laughed heartily also, at your having sent that ill-favoured cur, Osman Bey, into his own town tied on the back of an ass!’

‘Then you do not think,’ said Hassan, ‘that the Kiahia will be very hard on my follies? Much



will depend upon it, for the Viceroy told my father that he intended to consult the Kiahia on the subject.'

'In the mejlis (*i.e.* the council), and in the presence of others,' replied Reschid, 'the Kiahia will talk before Mohammed Ali with great solemnity and severity about offences against the laws, &c., &c., but when they are together in private he will tell him that you were a hot-blooded youngster, driven mad by the insulting cruelty of Osman Bey; and it is fortunate that even the merchants and villagers who have sent in complaints of having been plundered by your band have always written that you never permitted any bloodshed, and that you often restored to the poorest the booty taken from them. No, no, Hassan; you have nought to fear, for we will bring such a battery to bear upon the Viceroy that he will not be able long to hold out; we will attack him in front, while a certain Khanum, whom I could mention, will besiege the harem—nay, do not colour up, for we have all heard how you saved the life of Delì Pasha's daughter—and as Fate seems to have destined you to be a robber, you began your trade by stealing her heart.'

'Not so, Reschid,' replied Hassan, laughing; 'I gave her my own first, and if she would not

give it me back, but chose to give me hers in place of it, you cannot accuse me of theft.'

'I wish some dark-eyed houri would steal mine,' said Reschid, 'for it is a very troublesome article to keep in one's own possession ; I am sure I know not why I should have lent you a large slice of mine from the date of our first acquaintance, for you do not deserve it ; you have not even offered me your congratulations.'

'On what event?' said Hassan. 'On your marriage?'

'Marriage? no,' replied his merry friend ; 'on becoming a great man ! Have you not heard that since we parted I have been made khaznadar to the Kiahia ? Mashallah ! it is a wonderful office. Bakshishes are plentiful as petitioners, and if I wanted money I should only have to stand for a minute before our divan with my hand open and my eyes shut. Wallah ! Hassan, I am in a fair way to become a greater robber than ever you have been.'

'I will not dispute the precedence with you,' replied Hassan, 'and I congratulate you sincerely on your advancement, but as I am now a poor prisoner, and have no bakshish to offer, I fear I cannot expect that your Excellency will intercede with the Kiahia on my behalf.'

‘Bakkalum ! we shall see,’ answered Reschid, with mock gravity, and took his leave.

Another of the earliest and most frequent of Hassan’s visitors was his old friend Ahmed Aga, who brought him many kind messages from Delì Pasha, although the latter had been forbidden by the Viceroy, for the present, to visit Hassan in person ; neither did our hero long remain without secret communication with his lady-love ; for he had not been two days in Cairo ere the bowàb sent up word that a dumb boy wished to see him, and orders having been given for his admittance, Murad rushed into the room, and kissed Hassan’s feet and hands with every demonstration of overflowing attachment.

Our hero was much touched by the grateful affection of his mute *protégé*, whom he received with all his former kindness, and he smiled at finding himself, after a few minutes, seated by the side of the intelligent boy, practising over again the finger-language that he had partially forgotten. His efforts in recalling it did not long go unrewarded, for he was soon able to comprehend that his youthful companion was a frequent visitor to Delì Pasha’s harem, where he was a great favourite of the old chief eunuch, and of Fatimeh Khanum ; nay, that he sometimes had the honour

of being introduced into the presence of Amina herself. The young lady flattered herself that the interest which she felt in the dumb boy arose entirely from compassion for his infirmity, but whether it was not partially owing to his having been a *protégé* of Hassan's we leave to the judgment of the discerning reader.

With what pleasure did our hero sit and hear him relate all his little tales of that harem ; how he had bought some fine blue beads for the eunuch, and some sweetmeats for Fatimeh, of which she had given him a portion to eat ; 'and see,' he continued, 'what I got from another,' and as he spoke he pulled out a little bouquet of flowers.

'Who gave you these ? and for whom were they intended ?' said Hassan, impatiently.

'I must not tell,' replied the sly little messenger, giving them to Hassan ; 'but I have done with them as I was bid.'

'And I,' replied Hassan, instinctively divining whence they came, 'must not give you any message concerning them, but you may say what became of them,' and, as he spoke, he pressed them to his lips, and, opening his vest, placed them near his heart. The little boy smiled, and kissing his protector's sleeve, withdrew, to give an account of his mission.

It may well be imagined that, cheered by such visits, Hassan's time passed agreeably enough, nor was his confinement irksome, for at the back of his father's house was a space sufficiently large to admit of his taking his favourite exercise; and here he might daily be seen employed for several hours in breaking in, and training for the jereed game, several high-couraged young colts which he found in his father's stable.

Nevertheless, day after day passed without bringing any material change in his situation; the exertions of his friends seemed to have failed in inducing Mohammed Ali to grant him a free pardon, and the stout Derwish refused to make any second application, saying—

‘If the fact of the brave boy's having saved the life of Mohammed Ali's faithful soldier and servant does not merit reward in his estimation, I would rather cut out my tongue than apply to him again.’

So time wore on, and Hassan's spirits, which had begun to be depressed by the monotony of his life, were again refreshed by the arrival of Abou-Hamedi leading Shèitan, who had entirely recovered from his wounds, and whose coat, saving two or three honourable scars, was as bright and glossy as ever.

A packet also reached Cairo from Hadji Ismael, the merchant, sent in reply to a letter written to him by Hassan immediately on his arrival. The packet contained all the relics which had been found on Hassan's infant person, and which it will be remembered he had entrusted to the worthy merchant's keeping. Although not necessary to confirm Hassan's identity, of which the veteran had never entertained a doubt, a tear gathered in his eye as it dwelt upon these reminiscences of his youth, and of his long-lost wife.

‘Hassan,’ said he, ‘I have ascertained that the old woman from whom I had hoped to learn something of your mother's fate is dead; but we must not abandon hope: Allah is great, and he is the revealer of secrets. Our proverb says, ‘Patience is the key of happiness;’ let us be patient, my son, and trust in Allah.’

## CHAPTER XII.

### A DISCOVERY AND A CONSPIRACY.

ONE day, Derwish Bey, in consequence of a message received from Delì Pasha, had gone down to Boulak to pay a visit to the latter. After the interchange of the customary pipes and compliments, the attendants were dismissed, and Delì Pasha told his old comrade that he had just seen the Kiahia Pasha, and had learnt from him that he entertained a good hope that Hassan would soon receive a full pardon from the Viceroy, in confident anticipation of which he had desired to speak with him on the subject of the marriage of their children, of whose mutual attachment there could be no doubt.

Derwish Bey assured his old comrade of the sincere pleasure which the alliance would give to himself, and that destiny had brought the two young people together in a manner so extraordinary with the obvious intention of their being united. After a brief and friendly discussion respecting the dowry, and the provision to be made for the young couple, which terminated to their mutual satisfaction, Delì Pasha said—

‘Now, Derwish, that we are to be related, by the marriage of our children, and as you have no wife to settle these harem affairs for you, it is right that you should see your intended daughter-in-law, and I will send and inquire whether she is in her apartment, and can receive us now.’ He clapped his hands, and delivered the message to a servant, who speedily returned from the harem door with the reply—‘On our head be it, we shall be honoured by your visit.’

Amina remained in her inner room. How her heart beat at the thought that she was going to see Hassan’s father; and the blood mantled in her cheek as she reflected that her father could not have brought him to the harem had not the marriage been agreed upon between them. Fatimeh Khanum was charged to receive them, and pay them the first compliments in the outer apartment, after which she was to introduce them to her presence.

As soon as they entered the harem curtain-door, Fatimeh, in her capacity of Kiahia Khanum, received them with a courteous salaam, and commenced the usual complimentary phrases of welcome, when on a sudden her tongue began to falter; she threw back her veil to see more clearly the features of Derwish, and then, throw-



ing wide her arms in the attempt to embrace his knees, she exclaimed, 'Selim! Selim!' and fell fainting at his feet.

Raising her gently, and placing her on a divan which was near, the veteran gazed upon her altered but still pleasing features, and tears of joyful emotion started in his eyes, as he said, 'It is, indeed, my long-lost Zeinab! Allah be thanked! what blessings has he poured on my grey head.'

Amina, alarmed at the exclamation and the fall of her faithful friend and instructress, whom she loved almost as a mother, now rushed into the room, and only giving a rapid glance of greeting to her father, hastened to the side of the insensible Khanum.

With what overwhelming emotions did he, the rude old soldier, who had been for so many years cast out from all the comforts and tender ties of domestic life, contemplate the lovely figure now bending with all the anxious care of a daughter over his newly-found wife. She sprinkled her brow with water, chafed the cold hands within her own; and when she found that her efforts were successful, and that the Khanum began to recover her senses, she threw back the rich redundant tresses that had fallen over her face and

neck, and looking up in her father's face said, almost in a tone of reproach—

‘Father, what has been said or done to reduce my dear Khanum to this state?’

‘Come into the next room, my child, and I will tell you all,’ said Delì Pasha, leading her away; and then observing that the Khanum was fast coming to herself, he added, addressing the other attendants, ‘Begone, all of you, and wait without.’

While Delì Pasha was explaining to his daughter the unexpected accident by which Derwish Bey had found in their Kiahia Khanum, whom they had always known as Fatimeh, his long-lost wife Zeinab, the re-united couple, left alone, were recounting to each other the incidents and adventures that they had met with during their long separation; and when Fatimeh learnt that Hassan was indeed her son, tears of grateful pride and joy streamed from her eyes as she said—

‘Oh, Selim, a secret voice in my heart whispered this to me, and yet I dared not believe it. I saw him—I gazed upon him—I loved him with an affection that I could not explain to myself. In fear and terror I was the confidante of his love for Amina. I thought that I was doing wrong; and yet, while I warned and reproved them

both, Allah knows how my heart bled within me, and longed to see them united. Allah be praised for all his goodness, they will yet be happy! for in truth, Selim, there lives not in all Egypt a maiden so sweet in temper, so adorned with all high and amiable qualities as my Amina. Let us go in and see her, and let her know how happy we are.' So saying, she led the way into the inner room, where Amina threw herself into the Khanum's arms and wept upon her neck. The tender words of 'my mother' and 'my child' interchanged between them could scarcely add anything to the affection which they had borne to each other in their former relation of instructress and pupil.

Seldom, indeed, does it happen that a Moham-medan soil, so sterile of domestic affections, can witness so happy a kindred group as was there assembled; and the news soon spread throughout the house that their Kiahia Khanum was the mother of Hassan and the wife of Derwish Bey. All the eunuchs and slave-girls in the harem crowded round her to kiss her hand, and she found in their sincere congratulations a reward for the gentle rule that she had exercised over them.

The other wives of Delî Pasha also sent over from the opposite wing of the harem a message

to the effect that they wished to come over and pay her a visit of felicitation ; and as it was contrary to etiquette that Derwish Bey should see them, he availed himself of the opportunity to rise and take his leave, saying—

‘ I must go and communicate this happy news to our dear boy ; you know not how his heart has longed to find and embrace his mother. Amina, may I take him a message from you ? What shall I say to him ? ’

A sweet blush passed over the face of the maiden, as she replied in a low voice—‘ Say to him what your kind heart dictates. With my father’s permission I will not gainsay your words.’

‘ May I tell him, then,’ said the veteran, ‘ that his faithful love is returned ? ’

Amina raised her liquid eyes to her father’s face, and meeting there an approving smile, she hid her blushes on the Khanum’s shoulder, as she murmured, ‘ Now, and for ever ! ’

With what a light and buoyant heart did the old soldier mount his horse to return to his house and communicate his budget of glad tidings to his son ; but he was doomed to disappointment, for on arriving and inquiring for Hassan he was nowhere to be found. One of the sàises on being questioned, stated that he had ridden

out early in the morning, accompanied by Abou-Hamedi, but no one knew whither he had gone.

‘Rash boy,’ exclaimed Derwish Bey; ‘now has he overthrown all our plans, and dipped our hands in scalding water. He was under arrest, and ordered to remain within these walls. Mohammed Ali will be furious, and Allah knows how we shall appease his anger.’

Let us now explain to the reader the circumstances which had led to Hassan’s sudden disappearance.

Before the dawn of this same day Hassan had been roused from his sleep by the entrance of Murad, the dumb boy, who had with the greatest difficulty awakened the drowsy bowàb and obtained admittance. Our hero saw at a glance that his young *protégé’s* countenance was unusually haggard and careworn, and that he was exhausted by fatigue.

After ordering some bread and a cup of coffee to be brought immediately, he asked Murad in his usual kindly tone what had led him to come before daylight, and why he looked so pale and fatigued. The little boy gazed at him earnestly, and then, with his fast-moving fingers, said, ‘A matter of life and death.’

‘Rest and compose yourself for a few moments,’

replied Hassan, who saw that the boy was in a state of nervous excitement, and he would not permit him to begin his story until he had eaten some bread and drunk his cup of coffee. But the secret with which Murad's breast was charged was of such a nature that he longed to unburthen it to his protector, fearing that the loss even of a few minutes might be productive of disastrous consequences.

The abstract of his narrative was as follows :— On the preceding day he had accidentally passed by a *café*, situated near the Bab-en-Nasr (the Gate of Victory) when he heard a voice within, which he thought he recognised as that of Osman Bey, in conversation with another man, and he distinguished plainly the names of Mohammed Ali, Delì Pasha, and that of the Kiahia mentioned in rapid and eager tones. In conclusion, the one speaker said to the other—

‘It must be done quickly ; meet me here again to-night, two hours after sunset, and bring the others with you.’

Murad felt an irresistible curiosity to learn the subject of this evening conference, and he did not anticipate much difficulty in doing so, as he was well known to the keeper of the coffee-shop, a bluff old Arnàout, who had often allowed the

friendless and mutilated child to earn or beg a few coppers at his door before the kindness of Hassan and Amina had placed him beyond the reach of absolute want.

Hastening home, Murad took out of his box and old and ragged dress, which he had not worn for a twelvemonth, and having put it on, hung round his neck a soiled tablet, with which he had formerly solicited the assistance of the charitable, and on which was written, in Turkish and Arabic, 'Give a few paras to the deaf and dumb for the love of Allah!'

Thus accoutred, he sallied forth about an hour after sunset, and made his way to the *café* above-mentioned.

The old Arnàout, on noticing him, said, 'Murad, poor little fellow, it is long since I have seen you, where have you been?' but receiving no reply, he added, 'I forgot that he can neither hear nor answer me,' and, so saying, he dropped one or two copper coins into his hand, which Murad put into a little tin-box which was slung beside his tablet; he then entered the *café*, as had been his custom of old, assisting the urchin who waited on the guests in carrying them lighted coals for their pipes, or taking away empty finjans of coffee; but this night the guests were few, for

the *café* was in an unfrequented part of the town, and the weather was cold.

The last of them were just retiring when Osman Bey entered, accompanied by three or four other men, all of whom, like himself, were wrapped in large cloaks. It was evident that they were desirous of preserving an incognito, for they had brought with them neither servants nor pipes; they sipped, however, some coffee, and smoked the rude chibouques of the *café*.

After a short time they were joined by another party, consisting also of four or five men, in the foremost of whom Murad recognised Ali Bey, the colonel of the regiment of Bashi-Bozouks who were on duty at the Esbekiah, and guarded Mohammed Ali's palace in that quarter. For some time they conversed on indifferent subjects, but ere long they called for arrack, which seemed to loosen their tongues, while Murad went about among them renewing their pipes.

'Who is this youngster?' said Ali Bey, catching him by the arm, while he addressed the coffee-house keeper.

'He is a poor child whom I have known for several years,' replied the Arnàout; 'he comes here sometimes to earn or beg a few paras; he is deaf and dumb.'



‘Is he?’ replied Ali Bey, drawing the boy towards him, and reading the tablet on his breast, ‘then he is just the boy for us. Send out those lads of yours, and Wallah! if we catch one of them coming within earshot we will clip their ears for them; we want to talk over our private affairs.’ He added a few words in Greek, which Murad did not understand, to which the Arnàout replied by a wink, and disappeared.

‘Bring me a pipe,’ said Ali Bey, suddenly turning to Murad, and speaking in a loud stern voice. Murad never stirred, but stared in the Colonel’s face, and opened his little tin box.

‘Jaffier spoke the truth,’ muttered the Colonel, half aloud, ‘I thought he would not dare to deceive me; the imp is as deaf as a stone.’ They then continued to drink their cans of arrack, which Murad refilled for them, while they spoke without reserve of the plans which they had met to arrange, and which were neither more nor less than to seize or kill Mohammed Ali, and overthrow his government.

‘Are you sure of your Bashi-Bozouks, Ali?’ inquired Osman Bey.

‘Never fear them,’ replied Ali; ‘the dogs are as savage as bears. We have drawn their pay from the Treasury, but we have not given them a

para of it for some months, and have told them that Mohammed Ali refuses to pay them, and threatens to bastinado any of them that demand their pay ; they are all on guard at the Esbekiah Palace, and if he falls into their clutches he will not give us much more trouble ; the difficulty is how to bring him there, for the guards at Shubrah are obstinate fellows, and would fight like devils !

‘ I will manage that matter,’ said Osman Bey. ‘ Those Shubrah guards are from Delì Pasha’s regiment ; I will go there to-morrow morning, and ask an audience of Mohammed Ali, and will easily persuade him that those guards are not to be trusted, for that Delì Pasha wants to marry his daughter to that outlawed robber, called Hassan, who is now in Cairo, and as they have not been able to obtain his pardon, they are conspiring against the Viceroy, and tampering with the guards, who are of Delì Pasha’s own regiment. Mohammed Ali will assuredly believe there is some truth in this statement, and will agree to my proposal of coming in at once to his palace at the Esbekiah.’

‘ Have you succeeded yet in introducing the brother of your man Ferraj into the household at Shubrah ?’ inquired another of the conspirators.

‘ Yes,’ replied Osman Bey. ‘ Hadji Moham-

med is employed in the house, and tells me all that goes on. If our other plans fail, that scoundrel can do the job for us with a cup of coffee, and he must do my bidding; for he knows that a word of mine can send him when I will to the gellad (executioner) or the galleys.'

'How are your fellows, Nour-ed-din?' said Ali, the colonel, addressing one of the conspirators. 'Can we count upon them?'

'I am not sure,' replied the officer thus interrogated. 'I have kept back their pay, too, and have thrown out a few phrases to stir their discontent; they grumble enough, and if our first blow succeeds they will doubtless join us; but they are much afraid of Ibrahim Pasha. How is he affected in this matter?'

'We must not tell it him beforehand,' replied Osman Bey; 'for with all his cruelty he is a craven at heart and might betray us, not from the love, but the fear that he has for Mohammed Ali. Let us put the Old Lion out of the way, and I will answer for managing Ibrahim afterwards. He will not be very angry, depend upon it.'

They then exchanged a few more sentences to regulate their proceedings for the following day, of which Murad only caught the words, 'You

all meet at my house at noon ;' this was spoken by Ali Bey, who, as he rose up to go away, almost stumbled over the prostrate form of Murad, who had rolled himself in his old torn cloak, and lay on the floor feigning sleep, but listening with eager anxiety to the dangerous secrets of which he had accidentally been made the partaker.

'What is this son of a dog doing here?' said Ali Bey, pointing with his foot to the recumbent form of Murad.

'It is only the deaf and dumb child,' replied one of the others, contemptuously.

'Supposing he should prove to be neither deaf nor dumb, nor asleep?' said the suspicious Arnàout.

'I will just give him six inches of my dagger in the ribs, and then I shall be sure that he is deaf and dumb.' So saying, he drew his dagger, and held over the boy's face a half-expiring lamp that he snatched from the table. A start, a tremor, nay, the slightest indication of consciousness would have been Murad's instant death-warrant ; but the brave little boy bore the severe ordeal. Not a muscle nor a quickened respiration betokened any other condition than the quiet slumber of youth.

‘Pish!’ said the rough savage, ‘his sleep is fast enough, whether he be deaf or not. Inshallah! before long my dagger will drink better blood than his.’ So saying, he strode out of the *café*, followed by the other conspirators, who then separated, and went to their several homes.

For nearly an hour after they were gone Murad remained motionless collecting his scattered thoughts, which, unaccustomed as they were to dwell on conspiracies or political revolutions, seemed oppressed and overwhelmed by the terrible secret which he bore about him.

No sooner, however, did he recover from the terror which he had endured from the Arnàout’s dagger, than he resolved at once to hasten to Hassan, and tell him everything. This he did before dawn, as we have above-mentioned; and our hero, having heard his tale, and made him repeat certain portions of it, so as to feel assured of the accuracy of his memory, told Murad to remain in his room till he returned.

Having armed himself with a brace of pocket-pistols and a short dagger, which he concealed within his vest, he mounted his horse, and accompanied by Abou-Hamedi, rode out towards the desert by the Gate of Victory. After skirting the Desert for a couple of miles, he turned to the

left, through some cultivated fields and olive-plantations, until he found himself at the gates of the Shubrah garden. His only fear was that he might be denied access to the Viceroy; but he had made up his mind to demand it through his old acquaintance, the medical interpreter.

Assuming, therefore, an authoritative air, he said to the gate-keeper in Turkish, 'I wish to see the Hekim-Bashi, and my business with him is urgent.'

The man, influenced by Hassan's commanding figure and the use of the Turkish language, immediately led the way to a small pavilion occupied by the hekim, and adjoining the private apartments of the Viceroy.

When Hassan entered, he found the hekim sitting in a comfortable dressing-gown, drinking his cup of coffee, and looking over the last Italian journal. When he saw our hero, and received his salutation, he seemed sorely perplexed; for a year and a half of hardship and exposure had changed the youth into a powerful man, yet the frank, open countenance, not easily forgotten, was there unchanged, and it was not necessary for him to name himself, for the hekim broke out suddenly—'*Cospetto di Bacco!* it is Hassan himself. Why, man, I am glad to see you—no, I

am not ; I am sorry to see you—for you must be mad. You know that you are under arrest, and forbidden to leave your father's house—the Viceroy will never forgive disobedience to his orders.'

'Excellency,' said Hassan, gravely, 'I have come upon a matter of life and death, and I must see the Viceroy immediately and alone. It is not *my* life or death that is at stake, but one of greater value to me, to you, and to Egypt.'

'Per Bacco!' said the hekim, 'your forehead looks like a thunder-cloud, and you speak like a man who is in earnest. You wish to see the Viceroy immediately and alone, you say?'

'Immediately,' repeated Hassan, impatiently ; 'and alone.'

'But,' replied the cautious physician, 'Mohammed Ali is a fearless man—the world knows it ; but would it be usual, would it be right that he should be left alone with——' Here the worthy physician hesitated as he cast his eyes upon the powerful figure before him.

'With a freebooter and outlaw, you would say,' interposed Hassan, with one of his frank smiles. 'But I am not an assassin. I only said alone, because I know not who of all his Highness's attendants are trustworthy ! However, I suppose *you* are ; and therefore if the Viceroy pleases, you

may be present, and you may hold a loaded pistol at my ear all the time that I am in his Highness's presence.'

'I ask your pardon,' said the Italian hekim, offering his hand; 'I did not mean to offend or to hint at your being an assassin; but you know what mischievous tongues wag in these Turkish serais, and how I should be blamed were I not cautious in all that regarded the safety of my chief. Now help yourself to a cup of coffee, and I will do your commission at once.' So saying, the hekim disappeared through a side-door that communicated directly with the Viceroy's apartment. In about five minutes he re-appeared, and making a sign to Hassan to follow, led him to a small room where Mohammed Ali was seated in the corner on a divan covered with rich crimson damask.

'You have broken your arrest,' said Mohammed Ali, fixing his piercing eyes on Hassan as he entered; 'I trust you have sufficient reason for your disobedience.'

'Your Highness shall judge,' replied Hassan, 'when you have heard what I have to tell. I knew that I had already given you such serious ground of offence that I would not for a light cause have added another to the list.'



‘ Wallah ! it is true that you have committed enough already in pillaging my villages and my people,’ said Mohammed Ali, sternly ; ‘ let that pass for the present, and say what you have to say before the Hekim-Bashi.’

Hassan then proceeded to give a clear and distinct relation of the conspiracy, as communicated to him by Murad. The expressive features of Mohammed Ali underwent various changes during the narration, and his fingers more than once clutched the handle of the sword that lay across his knee when Hassan mentioned the names of the conspirators.

As soon as Hassan had concluded his narrative, Mohammed Ali, bending his shaggy brows on the speaker, said, ‘ By the head of my father, if this tale be true, I will defile the graves of the fathers and mothers of these ungrateful dogs ; but how can I feel assured that the whole is not an invention of this crazy, mutilated child ?’

‘ I believe it is all true,’ said Hassan, with simple earnestness, ‘ for the boy, though dumb, is faithful and intelligent ; I am sure he would not deceive me, neither has he knowledge sufficient to refer to all these names and plots if he had not heard them as he states ; moreover, it is easy for your Highness to ascertain some points

which may satisfy you as to the truth of the whole.'

'Which points?' said the Viceroy, hastily.

'First,' replied Hassan, 'is it true that a man called Hadji Mohammed, the brother of Osmar Bey's servant, Ferraj, has lately entered your Highness's service?'

'That is true,' interrupted the hekim, 'for I have seen the fellow, and an ill-looking dog he is.'

'Secondly,' continued Hassan, 'if the boy's story be correct, Osman Bey will visit your Highness within an hour or two, and recommend you to leave Shubrah and go into your palace of the Esbekiah, where Ali Bey's Bashi-Bozouks are on guard.'

'That is true,' replied the Viceroy; 'a few hours will remove all doubt. Hekim-Bashi, you remember that only a day or two ago the Kiahia wrote a note to say that some strange rumours were afloat as to these Bashi-Bozouks and another regiment being almost in mutiny from not having received their pay.'

'It is so,' replied the hekim, 'and I went to the pay-office, by your Highness's order, and got Ali Bey's receipt for the whole amount due to them duly sealed and certified. I have it here,'—and he produced the paper in question.

‘These hornets must be crushed, and there is no time to be lost,’ said the Viceroy, in a musing tone; then suddenly bending his shaggy eyebrows on Hassan, he added, ‘Young man, you have done your duty in bringing us this news, bad though it be. What is the course which it is now best to pursue?—speak your mind.’

‘Nay, your Highness,’ said Hassan, modestly, ‘if my arm or my life can be of use, they are at your service, but I am too young and inexperienced to offer an opinion in the presence of the best soldier in Islam.’

‘Nevertheless,’ replied the Viceroy, a certain malicious fun twinkling in the corner of his keen grey eye, ‘I would have your opinion, even though I should not choose to follow it. If all be true that I have heard, you have shown more conduct in eluding or defeating my troops with your lawless band of vagabonds than could have been expected from so young a beard; I would see whether your wit be as sharp, now that you profess a desire to serve me. Speak, therefore, and without fear or reserve.’

After a few moments of reflection, Hassan replied, ‘Were I to speak as my own impulse would prompt, I should say to your Highness, summon to your side the Pashas, Beys, and regi-

ments in whom you can trust, place me in the foremost rank, and let us straightway attack, bind or destroy these conspirators.'

Mohammed Ali read in his bright, eager glance, and bold, open front, the sincerity which dictated these words. Hassan continued, 'But I know that your Highness would gladly avoid, if possible, the bloodshed of your subjects, and the punishing the ignorant and the misled in the same degree as the scoundrels who have seduced them; I would therefore suggest that we meet stratagem with stratagem, and when Osman Bey comes, let your Highness pretend to be persuaded by his arguments, and agree to go into the Esbekiah Palace to-morrow; this will throw them off their guard, and all the conspirators will be gathered at Ali Bey's house; meanwhile I have a trusty follower here, little known in Cairo, for whose fidelity I will answer with my life; let him go forthwith to the Kiahia with a few lines, written by your Highness's order, instructing him to send a regiment that he can trust, and two or three hundred horsemen silently and secretly to the Esbekiah before dawn to-morrow, and let two or three guns be placed there, pointed at Ali Bey's house and your Highness's palace; let Delì Pasha take 500 men from this

regiment at Shubrah and march it at the same hour and in silence to occupy the gardens behind Ali Pasha's house and the road to Boulak ; let the guards in the citadel be doubled at night, and the regiment of Derwish Bey, now encamped outside of the town, be brought in to keep in check that of Nour-ed-din, which is supposed to be in a state of mutiny ; my follower shall then pass the night among them, and when they know that they have been cheated of their pay by their own officers, they will not raise a musket against your Highness. The most difficult task is to manage these Bashi-Bozouks, but I am not without hopes of reclaiming them without bloodshed ; let your Highness give me that receipt of Ali Bey's for their money, and let me hide it under my belt ; order me now to be seized and taken by your soldiers into the guard-house of the Esbekiah palace, where you intend to have me tried and judged to-morrow. As soon as it is known that Hassan the outlaw is confined there, they will flock in numbers to see me ; I will talk with them, and I will show them the receipt, and explain to them how they have been cheated and duped by Ali Bey. Inshallah ! at dawn to-morrow, when the troops close in on all sides to surround the Bey's house and take prisoner himself and his confede-

rates, I will have these Bashi-Bozouks' minds so changed that instead of fighting with your troops they will cry 'Long life to Mohammed Ali.'

While Hassan was speaking, the Viceroy never took his piercing eyes off the young man's countenance, and when he had concluded, he said—

'Hassan, you have not disappointed me; your plan is good, and I will have it followed out; but I do not like to send you in among those mutinous Bashi-Bozouks; they are bloodthirsty fellows, and if they find from your speech that you are exhorting them in my behalf to return to their duty, they will tear you to pieces.'

'Fear not for me, your Highness,' replied Hassan, calmly; 'in dealing with and leading turbulent spirits like these I have had much, alas! too much experience; let me try it once more in a good cause; and if my life is sacrificed, why, Allah is merciful, and your Highness will perhaps tell Delì Pasha and Derwish Bey that Hassan was not unworthy of your trust.'

A bright gleam shot from the eyes of Mohammed Ali as he replied—

'You are a brave youth, Hassan, and all shall be done as you desire; go in with the hekim to his room, prepare the letters, and despatch your messenger. Allah be with you.'

Hassan retired, and in a short time Abou-Hamedi was despatched with the letters and full verbal instructions; an hour later our hero was arrested and sent into the Esbekiah palace under a strong guard, and the news was spread all over Cairo that Hassan-Ebn-el-Heràm was to be tried and judged on the following day.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### PROGRESS AND ISSUE OF THE CONSPIRACY.

HASSAN had not left the Shubrah gardens more than an hour when Osman Bey arrived and demanded an audience, which was immediately granted, the Hekim-Bashi remaining in attendance on his chief.

After the usual preliminaries of respect and compliment, Osman Bey proceeded to unfold the object of his coming, which proved to coincide exactly with what had been stated by Hassan. The Viceroy listened in silence, and although Osman Bey could not avoid noticing the fire that gleamed in those deep grey eyes, he attributed it to the anger felt by Mohammed Ali against those whose treacherous designs he had pretended to expose.

‘We thank you as you deserve for your communication,’ said the Viceroy, ‘and we will take all the requisite precautions. To-morrow, as you recommend, we will go to the palace of Esbekiah.’

‘May your Highness’s life be prolonged,’ re-



plied Osman Bey. 'I rejoice to find that you have seized that dangerous robber, Hassan ; I met him on the road under the escort of your Highness's guards.'

'Yes,' said the old Chief. 'Inshallah ! to-morrow you shall see him treated as he deserves—you shall see that Mohammed Ali knows how to punish traitors.'

'Inshallah !' replied Osman Bey, taking his leave with a salutation of profound respect.

Scarcely was he out of sight ere Mohammed Ali muttered between his hard-set teeth—'Dog ! hyena ! serpent ! Inshallah ! to-morrow he *shall* see and feel how traitors are punished ! Hekim-Bashi, you are a learned man, and read many books—I never read anything but men's faces, and, Mashallah ! I rarely read them amiss—I have long had my eye mistrustfully on this scoundrel ; look from his false and malignant countenance to the open front and clear bold eye of Hassan ; why, man, there is truth written there as plainly as in the Fat'hah.\* I have been some-

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\* The Fat'hah is the opening chapter of the Koran. It is recited at least once on all solemn occasions among the Moslems, and, being very short, is known by heart by many among them, who, like Mohammed Ali, know little more of the contents of their sacred book.

what slow in forgiving him, because he has a daring spirit that requires to be checked, and example requires that acts such as he has committed should be punished ; but if he survives and succeeds to-morrow, by the head of my father, I will reward and promote him !’

‘ I am glad to hear your Highness say so,’ said the good-natured hekim, ‘ for I liked him from the first day that I saw him ; and his Bedouin education, added to the insults received from that hypocritical traitor, offer some excuse for the lawless life that he led for a while.’

‘ Wait till to-morrow. Bakkalum, we shall see,’ said the Old Lion, smiling grimly. ‘ Now send me Abd-el-Kerim, who commands the regiment on duty here. He I know is faithful, and I will give him orders for his night march on the gardens to the rear of Ali Bey’s house, as Hassan suggested. Mashallah !’ he continued, ‘ did you notice how clear and complete were his plans to entrap and secure the scoundrels, after saying that he was too young to offer an opinion. Wallah ! if ever I am obliged to send my troops *there*, that Hassan shall command a division.’

‘ Send your troops *where*, your Highness ?’ said the hekim, inquiringly.

‘ Peace, man,’ said Mohammed Ali, recovering

from a momentary fit of abstraction. 'I was thinking of—of—of—perhaps of Darfour and Abyssinia.' A scarcely perceptible smile lingered on the lips of the medical interpreter, who had for some time suspected the ambitious views of his chief on Syria and Asia Minor, but he made his salaam in silence, and withdrew.

Meantime, while Abou-Hamedi was faithfully delivering the letters and messages entrusted to him, Hassan was no less diligent in the execution of the difficult task which he had undertaken. After being ushered into the precincts allotted to the Bashi-Bozouk guard, which included, indeed, all the extensive area in front of the palace itself, Hassan remained for a considerable time apart, as if undesirous of communicating with them. His object was that they should come to him; nor was he long in attaining it.

Struck by his commanding figure and features, some of the loiterers about the door inquired his name of the guards who had brought him, and when they learnt that it was Hassan-Ebn-el-Heràm, of whom they had heard so much, all flocked around him to scan more closely the appearance of the celebrated outlaw. Neither had he much to fear from their hostility, for being themselves engaged in a mutinous rising against the Govern-

ment, they looked upon him as a sure ally during the outbreak expected on the morrow.

The intelligence of his capture and presence among them soon reached the furthest part of the barracks, and it happened that seven or eight were there who had formed a part of the band which, under Osman Aga's guidance, had made so unsuccessful an attack on Hassan near Siout, and whom, it will be remembered, our hero had dismissed unhurt, after giving them some dinner and some money, and telling them it was a pity to see such fine fellows in so mean a service.

These seven or eight men no sooner heard of his presence in their barracks than they hastened to greet him, calling out as they approached—

‘Welcome, Hassan èed-el-maftouha, do you not remember us? We were of the party whom you treated so well when we were in your power, and when you sent back Osman Bey to Siout on a donkey.

‘I believe, comrades,’ he replied, ‘that on that day I maltreated none excepting Osman Bey, and he had deserved it at my hands.’

‘He was a brute,’ said the first speaker, lowering his voice; ‘but Ali Bey, our present chief, is better; he always takes our part against those who rob and injure us.’

‘Who are they who rob and injure you?’ inquired Hassan.

‘Why, Mohammed Ali, to be sure, and his rascally Paymaster-General.’

‘I had always heard,’ said Hassan, ‘that Mohammed Ali paid his brave Bashi-Bozouks regularly.’

‘He used to do so,’ said the fellow, sulkily; ‘but for eighteen months we have not had a piaster of pay; see, our clothes are all in rags, and we have nothing wherewith to buy a pound of tobacco or a little rice-water.\* Ali Bey and Osman Bey have petitioned and laboured for us in vain. But we will have our rights. Inshallah! we shall see something to-morrow.’

‘Yes, our rights and our pay, or else blood and plunder!’ said half-a-dozen rough voices around.

We have not space to detail all that passed between Hassan and the mutineers; suffice it to say, that he completely gained their confidence, and occupied himself during the remainder of the day in ascertaining the character and views of those who seemed the more influential among them.

It was not his purpose to attempt putting in

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\* A slang term for *arrack*.

execution the plan that he had formed until nightfall, when the gates would be shut, and none could go out to give notice of his proceedings to Ali Bey, whose house was only separated from the palace by a walled garden. No sooner had that hour arrived than Hassan desired those whose confidence he had gained, including the seven or eight men from Siout, to call together all the regiment in front of the guard-house, as he had something of importance to communicate to them, and, at the same time, guards on whom they could depend were placed at the front and postern gates to prevent the ingress or egress of any one unchallenged.

As soon as they were all assembled, he said to them, in a clear and sonorous voice, that was heard by the farthest of that rough and turbulent band—

‘Comrades! some of you have known me personally, and most of you have heard of Hassan-Ebn-el-Herà̃m; did you ever hear of him that he aided the tyrant to trample on the oppressed, or the rich to plunder the poor?’

‘Never!’ shouted a score of voices.

‘Did you ever hear,’ he continued, ‘that he was sparing of his blood or his money, or that he ever betrayed a comrade?’

‘Never!’ shouted they again.

‘Then, by Allah!’ said Hassan, ‘he never will. He is here among you now alone, you may take his life to-night, or the Government may take it to-morrow, but so long as he has an arm to strike, it shall strike at the false and the oppressor in defence of the oppressed!’

‘Hassan for ever!’ shouted they again; ‘he is the man for us! Let us see the Government come to take his life to-morrow!’

‘Then,’ said he, raising his voice above the tumult, ‘if you believe me, and trust me as you say, let me tell you that you have been falsely betrayed!’

‘We know it!’ they cried; ‘we have been betrayed; we have been robbed of our pay, and we will have it now, and plunder to boot!’

‘You have been robbed and betrayed,’ said Hassan, in a deep stern voice, ‘but you know not the robbers nor the traitors who have injured you. I now denounce them to your just anger—they are Osman Bey, Ali Bey, and your own officers! who have drawn your pay, and have spent or locked it up themselves, in order to lead you to mutiny and to destruction!’

It is impossible to describe the confusion that prevailed in that lawless assemblage at the con-

clusion of this speech. Some shouted, 'It is false !' others cried, 'Kill him, he is a spy of Mohammed Ali !'

Pistols were drawn, daggers gleamed in the fitful torchlight ; others cried, 'Down with Ali Bey and the traitors !' but still the more numerous and moderate party in the regiment called aloud, 'Proof, proof ! we must have proof !'

'Proof you shall have, if ye will be silent and patient, like men, and not scream like the bakkal's wives before the Cadi.\*'

Silence having been restored, Hassan called aloud, 'Bring hither those torches, and come to my side any of you who can read.' Half-a-dozen approached in answer to this appeal.

'This is not enough,' said Hassan ; 'where is the yuzbashi† who commands the guard ? Let

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\* Alluding to a popular tale, in which four or five women, wives of a bakkal or grocer, came before the Cadi to make a complaint against their husband. They stormed and scolded all at once, and made such a din in the court that not a word could be heard or understood ; when at length they stopped for want of breath, the Cadi dismissed the case, saying, 'There is no crime of which the man can have been guilty that is not sufficiently punished by his having those women for wives.'

† Yuzbashi, literally, centurion, or captain over one hundred ; a rank in the Egyptian army corresponding to that of lieutenant.



him also come forward.' That functionary had hitherto remained a distant spectator of the scene ; but he was now urged forward by some of his own men to the spot where Hassan stood, and they shouted as they advanced—' Proof, proof ; we want proof !'

' Are you one of those,' said Hassan, fixing a stern and penetrating look on the yuzbashi, ' who have taken a share of these brave men's pay, and withheld it in order to induce them to revolt ?'

' I?' said the astonished yuzbashi. ' No, Wallah ! No pay have I seen myself for a year. See the holes in my shoes, and these ragged clothes ; do these look like robbing the pay of my men ? By the beard of my father, it is the Government who have robbed me and them of our due ! But who, in the name of the Prophet, are you who are haranguing my men, and questioning me as if you were a miralai (general) ?'

' I applaud your spirit,' replied Hassan, frankly. ' My name is Hassan-Ebn-el-Heràm, my voice has no authority excepting that of truth, and I have no motive but to prove to these brave men who they are who have wronged and betrayed them. Canst read, yuzbashi ?'

' Ay, Wallah ! that can I. For two years was I clerk in a divan before I entered the army.'

‘Well, then, read that aloud to your men,’ said Hassan, placing a paper before him.

As the yuzbashi read the contents to himself, the colour mounted to his cheeks, and all the words in Turkish which correspond to ‘cheat,’ ‘rogue,’ ‘traitor,’ and ‘scoundrel,’ burst in succession from his half-closed lips.

‘What is it—what is it?’ shouted a score of impatient voices at once.

‘It is a receipt in full, showing that the Paymaster has regularly placed in the hands of Ali Bey the whole amount of pay due to you up to last month. And here is Ali Bey’s seal at the bottom; I can swear to it, as I have often to countersign papers bearing his seal.’

Curses on Ali Bey’s father, mother, and all his ancestors now issued in torrents from the lips of the indignant assemblage; and not the least loud in venting maledictions was the yuzbashi, who had been unjustly suspected of sharing in the peculation of his superiors.

Hassan watched in silence the progress of the storm which he had raised; for he rightly judged that they would soon return to ask his advice as to the course which they should now pursue. Nature had formed him to lead either in the council or in the field such rough, bold spirits as

those by which he was surrounded, and they now came back to ask him what was next to be done as naturally as if he had been appointed their chief.

‘My brave fellows,’ said Hassan, ‘if your eyes are now open, and you are satisfied that you have been deceived and betrayed by your officers, there is but one course by which you can save yourselves and punish them.’

‘Name it,’ shouted a score of rough voices.

‘You know that I was brought here this morning from Shubrah ; while there I was neither blind nor deaf. I can swear to you by the head of my father that the treachery of Ali Bey, Osman Bey, and the others is known to Mohammed Ali. Even now troops from all quarters are surrounding this palace and Ali Bey’s house in the darkness of night. At daybreak you will see them with your own eyes—escape or resistance are no longer possible.

‘Curses on Ali Bey’s head and on his father’s grave,’ shouted the yuzbashi ; ‘what dirt has that vile dog caused us to eat. But you have not told us yet, Hassan, what is to be done. Are we to stay here and be butchered like sheep?’

‘Allah forbid !’ said Hassan. ‘I will answer with my head that if you follow my counsel, not

a hair of your beards shall be touched. How many men are there now in Ali Bey's house ?'

'If we count his and Osman Bey's, and Nour-ed-din Binbashi's mamelukes and followers, there may be two hundred of them in the house and buildings round his courtyard,' replied the yuzbashi.

'A mere handful,' said Hassan, scornfully ; 'you are enough to master them in five minutes. My advice, then, is this. As the Beys do not know that your eyes have been opened to their treachery, they will of course admit you at any hour. Let the yuzbashi knock at the gate, and say that he has something of importance to communicate to the Bey ; he will be admitted at once. As soon as the gate is opened for his admittance, a party of us following close behind him will rush in and overpower the bowàbs or sentries that may be there. We will then let in the remainder of our brave fellows, leaving only a small guard in this palace, and we will go and make prisoners of the Beys and all their followers. When Mohammed Ali's troops appear in the morning, I will go out to their commanders and tell them that you had been deceived and misled, but that you had now returned to your duty, in proof of which you had seized and were ready to deliver

up to them the conspirators. I will answer for you receiving your full pardon and your full pay besides.'

'Mashallah !' cried several voices, 'the plan is good, let us follow it at once.'

'It is not so easy as it seems,' said a cautious old fellow, who had an habitual dread of his commander. 'Ali Bey is a desperate and dangerous man to take ; he has always four pistols in his belt, and he fights like a devil.'

'Give me a sword, my lads, and leave Ali Bey to me,' said Hassan, his eyes lighting up as they always did at the approach of strife.

'Hassan's the leader for us,' shouted one of those whom he had released at Siout ; 'open hand in peace and iron hand in the fight.'

As he spoke, his own and half-a-dozen other swords were offered to Hassan's choice. Selecting, with the eye of a connoisseur, the trustiest blade, he said—'Now, my lads, let us go ; but remember, no bloodshed, excepting in self-defence. Our business is to take them alive ; and, Wallah ! we will take them if you are firm and steady. Now assemble at the gate in silence, and be ready.'

Whilst the men were collecting for the proposed expedition to the neighbouring house, Has-

san whispered to the yuzbashi the course that he was to pursue, adding, 'I do not know you, but I shall be close to you, and observe you well. If you are faithful, you will be rewarded ; but if you attempt to betray us, your head shall be the first to fall.'

'You shall see,' answered the yuzbashi, with a grim smile, 'whether I do not pay my debt to Ali Bey and those other scoundrels.'

The evening was now considerably advanced, the Ezn-el-âshah had long since been chanted\* from the mosques, but there seemed to be no symptoms of retiring to rest in Ali Bey's house. He himself, surrounded by Osman Bey, Nour-ed-din, and the other leaders of the conspiracy, were seated in his large salamlik, or reception-room, arranging their plans for the morrow, and discussing eagerly the course they should adopt towards Ibrahim Pasha after they had got rid of his father.

All of them felt confident that he would gladly profit by their crime ; but few felt sure that he would not punish its authors.

'He dare not punish us,' said Ali Bey, boldly,

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\* 'The Ezn-el-âshah' is the Muezzin's call to prayer about two hours after sunset.

‘we are too many. See here,’ he continued, drawing a paper from his vest, ‘here are the seals of twenty-four or twenty-five, none of whom are without power or friends; he may, indeed, affect to be angry at first, but he will be obliged to pardon and reward us.’

While he was yet speaking, a servant came in and said that the yuzbashi, Suleiman Aga, followed by a number of the Bashi-Bozouks, was without, and wished to see the Bey.

‘These fellows,’ said the latter to his companions, ‘are ready for any mischief. I have worked them up to such a pitch of discontent, that I can scarcely prevail on them to defer plundering the palace until to-morrow, when we shall have Mohammed Ali in our power. Let him come in.’

As he spoke, the yuzbashi, followed by a number of his men, entered the room, and the first words that he spoke were—

‘Bey, I can no longer control these men; they demand justice and their pay.

‘Justice and our pay,’ said a number of rough voices, as they kept pouring into the room.

‘You shall have it, my lads, to-morrow; pay and plunder to your heart’s content,’ said Ali Bey. ‘Only be patient to-night, and you shall

have vengeance on those who have robbed you of your right.'

'They shall have it now,' cried Hassan, coming suddenly forward, sword in hand.

'And who in the name of the prophet may you be?' said Ali Bey.

'Wallah! Wallah! it is that traitor scoundrel, Hassan-Ebn-el-Heràm,' cried Osman Bey, astonished at the sudden appearance of our hero, whom he had seen some hours before under arrest.

'Present,' said Hassan, in a deep, stern voice; and immediately the Bashi-Bozouks, who now lined the side of the room, presented their pistols at the knot of conspirators seated at its upper end.'

'Ali Bey, Osman Bey, and you others who have deceived and betrayed these brave men by withholding their pay, their hour of vengeance is come, not against Mohammed Ali to-morrow, but against you to-night. Yield yourselves prisoners, or I give the word to fire.'

'Never,' cried Ali Bey, springing, with the others, to his feet; 'we have adherents below enough to punish these mutinous scoundrels.'

'Ali Bey,' replied Hassan, sternly, 'your adherents are already overpowered—your whole plot is known to Mohammed Ali—his troops surround your house—you have no means of defence



or escape ; you can only now trust to the Viceroy's clemency.'

'You, at least, shall never live to boast of this treachery,' cried Osman Bey, who was literally foaming with rage, as he drew his sword and sprung upon Hassan.

The result was such as might have been expected, where strength, skill, and coolness were on one side and ungovernable fury on the other. Scarcely a few seconds elapsed ere Osman Bey's sword arm, severed by one cut, fell to the ground.

'Bind up his wound and secure him,' said Hassan, coolly to one of the Bashi-Bozouks who was near him, and without deigning another look at his fallen adversary, he addressed himself once more to Ali Bey, saying—

'I would fain avoid useless bloodshed ;—will you yield yourselves prisoners or not ?'

Ali Bey, though a cruel and vicious man, was not deficient in courage, but the hapless fate of his confederate, the determined language and commanding appearance of Hassan, and the formidable row of pistol-barrels that gleamed at his back might well have intimidated a bolder spirit. In the countenances of his companions he read nothing but dismay, so making a virtue of necessity, he replied—

‘We yield ourselves,’ and sullenly threw his sword on the floor at Hassan’s feet.

His comrades followed his example, and in a few minutes they were all disarmed and pinioned.

Their persons were searched by Hassan’s order, and he thus obtained possession of the paper to which the seals of the conspirators had been affixed, as above-mentioned.

Hassan spent the remainder of the night in visiting all the quarters of the house, and seeing that the prisoners of all ranks were duly guarded. The Bashi-Bozouks who had witnessed the summary chastisement that he had inflicted on Osman Bey, and who seemed to feel an intuitive conviction that he was armed with the authority which he assumed, obeyed him without a murmur.

No sooner had the day dawned than he took the yuzbashi and a few more of the men to the roof of the house, whence he showed them two field-pieces already in position in their front, and the troops of Mohammed Ali drawn up and surrounding them on every side.

‘Did I speak the truth,’ said Hassan, ‘when I told you that if you continued in mutiny you would be cut off to a man?’

‘Wallah! Hassan, you spoke the truth,’ they replied; ‘our only hope is now in you, for you

said that if we obeyed you we should have our pay and our pardon.'

'Fear not, I will make my words good; I will go out now alone and speak to the officer in command of these troops in front; I think I should know him.'

Descending from the roof, he walked alone out of the gate and advanced to the front of the column, the Bashi-Bozouks watching his movements from the roof and from the windows with the deepest anxiety.

'Mashallah!' cried one, 'what miracle is this? See Hassan-Ebn-el-Heràm is embracing that old officer, who, by his uniform, must be a Bey or Pasha; he is embracing also another younger officer; see, they are coming this way.'

'I know them well,' cried a soldier beside the first speaker; 'the old officer is Derwish Bey the Swordsman, a brave old fellow; I served with him in Arabia; the other is Reschid, khaznadar of the Kiahia Pasha.'

'Ajaib,'—'wonderful,' exclaimed several voices, 'that Hassan the Outlaw should be so familiar with these Beys.'

As they slowly approached the front of the palace, Hassan had time to explain briefly to his father the events of the night, and the manner

in which he had effected the capture of the conspirators.

On hearing his report, Derwish Bey desired Reschid to ride with all speed to Shubrah to inform Mohammed Ali of what had passed, and to ask his further orders; he also sent messengers to inform Delì Pasha, and the commanders of the other troops that had been drawn towards the palace, that the conspiracy was already crushed.

‘What news?’ said the Viceroy to Reschid, as the latter entered his salamlik breathless and dusty from his gallop.

‘May your Highness’s life be prolonged;—the conspirators are all prisoners awaiting your sentence.’

‘El-hamdu-lillah,’ (praise be to Allah) said the Viceroy. ‘Had you much fighting,—did the scoundrels make a stout resistance?’

‘We had no fighting at all,’ said Reschid, smiling; ‘Hassan did it all himself.’

‘How was that?’ said Mohammed Ali, surprised.

‘In the course of the night he explained to the Bashi-Bozouk regiment how they had been misled, robbed, and betrayed by their officers; he showed them Ali Bey’s receipt, proving that your Highness had done them no injustice; having

convinced and brought them back to their duty, he led them into the adjoining house to arrest their own officers. Osman Bey made a sudden spring at him, but Hassan cut his arm off, and the rest surrendered without resistance.'

'Aferin ! (bravo) Hassan,' said Mohammed Ali; then turning to Reschid, he added—'Let them await my coming at the palace ; I will be there within the hour.'

In less than the time specified the Viceroy appeared at the Esbekiah palace gates, mounted on Nebleh, who had now become his favourite charger, and surrounded by a numerous guard. Having received the reports of his pashas and generals as to the events of the night, and the names of the conspirators captured at Ali Bey's house, he said in a loud and stern voice—

'Let Ali Bey, Osman Bey, and Nour-ed-din, who have robbed the troops of their pay, incited them to mutiny, and conspired against the Government, suffer the doom of traitors—off with their heads ; and their villages, houses, and properties are confiscated. Let that villanous servant of Osman Bey, named Ferraj, whose crimes are known to me, and his brother, Hadji Mohammed, who came into my service to poison me, receive one thousand blows of the stick ; let the other

prisoners await further inquiry and orders. Where is Hassan-Ebn-el-Heràm ? Let him stand forth.'

Our hero thus called upon, came out and stood in front of that numerous assemblage.

'Hassan,' said Mohammed Ali, 'if the disgrace imposed upon you by that dog, Osman Bey, led you for a time to forget your duty, your fidelity and good service now, and on former occasions, deserve reward ; you are a worthy son of a worthy father : Hassan, son of Derwish Bey, I appoint you in the place of the traitor, Ali Bey, to the command of the Bashi-Bozouk regiment which he seduced ; I grant them, for your sake, a full pardon, and they shall have all their arrears of pay ; I present you also with the houses, lands, and property of Ali Bey, which have been forfeited to the Government.'

'May your Highness's honour and prosperity be boundless as your bounty,' said Hassan, coming forward to kiss the Viceroy's sleeve. He then retired a few steps, awaiting further commands or the signal to withdraw. The attitude of his noble figure, and the happy smile that lighted up his expressive features, plainly told to all around that (in the current phraseology of our dinner orators) 'it was the proudest moment of his life.'

He thought not of the lands or the wealth he

had acquired, but one of the brightest dreams of his youth was realized: he had been publicly recognised, by one whom he held to be the hero of the age, as a worthy son of the gallant Derwish Bey; this was the feeling which filled his breast with a bounding and tumultuous joy. His eye sought and met that of his father, and in the latter there glittered a tear of happiness; but Hassan's thoughts were speedily recalled to the presence in which he stood by the voice of Mohammed Ali, who once more addressing him, said—

‘I have rewarded your services, but only as you deserve; I wish now to add a favour from myself; have you any request to make? Speak it boldly.’

‘If your Highness will pardon my freedom, I would ask you to give to my friend Reschid the command of the regiment vacant by the punishment of Nour-ed-din. These men, like the Bashi-Bozouks, have been misled by the treachery of their commander, but when they learn how they have been deceived, their hearts and swords will return to your Highness's service; I have seen the courage and fidelity of Reschid put to the proof, and under him that regiment will be as true and efficient as any in your army.’

‘What say you, Kiahia?’ said Mohammed Ali to his Chief Pasha; ‘shall Hassan’s request be granted?’

‘Hassan has robbed me of a good khaznadar,’ said the old Kiahia, smiling, ‘but he has given your Highness a good colonel, so I must forgive him; neither will I deny that Reschid’s fingers, when employed on the seal or the pen, are always itching for the lance and the sword.’

‘Be it so, then,’ said the Viceroy; ‘make out the order to our war-office and we will seal it; and now, Hassan, as you would not ask anything for yourself, I must select for you. Strength and youth, and, Mashallah! good looks and a good name you have; it is a shame that you remain unmarried,—I have chosen you a wife from a noble harem, and I will give her a dower myself.’

Hassan’s lip grew pale and quivered, as he said, in a hesitating voice—

‘Pardon me, your Highness, if I decline the honour; I have made a vow that——’

Here Mohammed Ali interrupted him, saying—

‘Peace, delikànloo,’\* and he fixed on the young man one of those piercing glances in which anger and humour were so strangely blended that it was

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\* A very common phrase in Turkish for a ‘mad-cap.’ It means literally ‘mad-blood.’



difficult to know which was predominant. 'Is there already so much wind of prosperity in your head that you despise the alliance of the daughter of Delî Pasha?'

At the sound of that name the blood rushed to Hassan's temples. He dared not testify his rapturous delight before so many witnesses: Mohammed Ali read it in his eyes, while the lips only said—

'Your Highness has loaded me with benefits that the gratitude and service of a life cannot repay.'

'How obedient he became at once as soon as he heard the name,' said Mohammed Ali, in an undertone to Delî Pasha, who stood near him.

'Ah, your Highness knew their attachment,' said the old soldier, gratefully; 'to see them united under the shadow of your protection was my fondest wish.'

The Viceroy now retired into the palace, and on entering his private apartment said to his *hekim-bashi*—

'There is one thing yet I forgot to learn from Hassan; send him here immediately, and send my seal-bearer into Ali Bey's house with a guard, and tell him to seal every door, box, and cupboard, till Hassan goes in to take possession, otherwise the thoughtless boy will find nothing but empty walls.'

Our hero was just receiving the congratulations of his father and Delì Pasha when he was directed to reappear immediately in Mohammed Ali's presence. On entering the room, the Viceroy said to him—

‘When you captured the conspirators, did you learn anything certain of their numbers or associates without? Wallah! I forgot myself, or I would have ordered the scoundrels to be tortured to make them tell before their heads were cut off.’

‘Men under torture,’ said Hassan, ‘often tell falsehoods to gratify spite and revenge; but I took from Ali Bey’s vest a paper supposed to contain the seals of all those who had joined his plot; I have not shown it either to the Kiahia nor to my own father, for I thought it might contain names which, for various reasons, had better be known to none but yourself.’

‘Mashallah!’ said Mohammed Ali, ‘though you are sometimes a delikànloo you have a head fitted for older shoulders than yours; but I have long known that you could keep a secret. Do you remember the night that you passed in a certain palace near the Nile?’

‘Did your Highness know of that?’ said Hassan, in surprise.

‘Everything that passed,’ replied Mohammed Ali; ‘one of the blacks in the service of that

lady was a spy in my pay ; her conduct compelled me to have recourse to these measures, but I have taken that house away from her. The old woman who plotted with Ferraj to entice you into the house is at the bottom of the Nile ; you behaved nobly, and you have nobly kept secret events which, if known, would have brought disgrace on my family ;—go on as you have begun, and, Inshallah ! so long as Mohammed Ali lives, you shall not want a friend. Now you may retire.’

Hassan kissed the hand extended to him, and left the presence with an exulting heart, repeating, as he went out, the Arabic proverb—‘The husbandman prayed for a shower, and, lo ! an abundant rain,’ which answers to our proverb—‘It never rains but it pours,’ *i. e.*, that blessings, like misfortunes, seldom ‘come single’ in life.\*

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\* The episode of the conspiracy described in this chapter is founded on fact ; but it took place some years before the date assigned to our tale. One day when I was sitting *tête-à-tête* with Mohammed Ali he spoke very disparagingly of Ibrahim Pasha. I observed, ‘Yet on the occasion of that dangerous conspiracy against your Highness’s life he behaved well, and gave no encouragement to it.’ ‘He *dared* not,’ replied the old lion ; ‘but it was only fear that withheld him.’ I shall never forget the fire that flashed from his eyes as he uttered these words.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### CONCLUSION, IN WHICH THE AUTHOR GETS INTO TROUBLE.

A MONTH has passed since the conclusion of our last chapter, and Hassan's mother has wept tears of joy on the breast of her long-lost son, and they have reiterated to each other the mysterious attraction which had linked them in sympathy from the first moment that they had met in Deli Pasha's house, and Zeinab Khanum (whom we have so long known as Fatimeh) has refused to leave Amina, now doubly dear to her, until the nuptial ceremonies in progress are completed.

And Amina—who can paint her happiness?—a happiness such as not once in a century can fall to the lot of a daughter of Islam—to be united to one whom her virgin heart has so long worshipped as an idol—one whose courage and devotion she has so surely proved—one whom her pure and trusting heart tells her, and tells her truly, will love her alone, and will never pollute her home with a rival or a paramour.

Oh! is she not happy; what an intensity of

joy is mingled with the blushes on her cheek as she tries on the diamond ornaments with which the munificence of Mohammed Ali had decked the bride of Hassan. For his sake she is content to allow the busy tirewomen to exhaust their efforts in enhancing the brilliancy of her beauty, and they stain her delicate fingers with henna, and they draw a shaded line of kohl along the lids of her large and lustrous eyes, and they anoint her redundant tresses with the most sweet-scented unguents of Araby.

Fools, fools, think ye, with your tawdry ornaments, to improve the most lovely and perfect work of God upon earth? Think ye that Amina bespangled and bejewelled can be so fair in the eyes of her lover as when, freshly rescued from the terrors of the Nile, her dishevelled locks floated over his shoulders—when her cheek, delicate as the petal of a rosebud rested against his, and he inhaled in the first kiss of love a sweetness beyond honey and frankincense? Fools ye are, but ye are the slaves of custom; and, alas! it is not only in Islam that custom, in the shape of fashion, desecrates and distorts the beauty which it attempts to enhance. It is our province as narrators to describe what is, not what should be, wherefore we permit the tirewomen to continue

their decoration of the patient Amina, while we look forth into the town, and see what is going on there.

As Mohammed Ali had undertaken to dower the bride, all the city seemed disposed to take a share in the marriage festivities.

For a week Hassan's house had been illuminated every evening, and had been open to all visitors. Lambs, fowls, pilaws, and sweetmeats were demolished wholesale, and thousands of the poor were daily fed in the courts below.

The last day of these ceremonials had now arrived, and Amina was conducted in state to her bridegroom's house. The procession, which was of immense length, was preceded by a band of tumblers or buffoons, who amused the public by their antics and somersaults; while in front of them walked a sakkah, or water-carrier, staggering under the weight of an enormous goat-skin sack, filled with sand and water, which entitled him (if he could carry it to the bridegroom's house without setting it down) to a liberal present. Some malicious urchin contrived, unperceived, to cut a large hole in the bottom of the skin, and escaped in the crowd. The sakkah, feeling the water trickling down his legs, and the lightened load on his back, soon became aware of

the trick that had been played him, and attributing it to the tumblers and jugglers behind him, turned round and began to belabour them with his half-emptied sack, covering them from head to foot with sand and water, to the infinite amusement of the spectators.

Behind these buffoons there followed several open cars, one containing a 'kahweji,' or maker of coffee, with the implements of his profession; another, a 'helwaji,' or sweetmeat maker; a third, a 'faterji,' or pancake maker; all of whom dispensed their good things to the bystanders as they passed.

After these came a band of musicians, who were followed by a dozen married ladies of rank, mounted on white donkeys, their saddles adorned with crimson silk and gold embroidery; to these succeeded a troop of unmarried girls on donkeys similarly accoutred.

Then came the bride, veiled from head to foot; a Cashmere shawl over the veil concealing completely her face and figure from the envious eyes of the spectators.

It is usual for brides of rank to ride on donkeys, but on this occasion Amina was mounted on 'Nebleh,' splendidly caparisoned by the Viceroy's order, the beautiful Arab's embroidered

reins being held by eunuchs, who walked on each side of her head; the procession was closed by a party of mamelukes richly accoutred, and a band of Turkish music.

On reaching Hassan's house, the bride and her female attendants sat down to a repast prepared for them; the bridegroom being, according to etiquette, absent at the bath. After a certain time he returned with his party, and a *cortège* scarcely less numerous than that of the bride.

On entering the house, he left his friends to refresh themselves below, while he went to an upper apartment, where Amina was seated, still completely veiled, between Zeinab Khanum and one of Delì Pasha's wives.

Agreeably to custom, Hassan went through the form of giving to each a piece of money, called the 'unveiling fee' (for up to that moment the bridegroom is supposed not to have seen the face of the bride); the two elder ladies then retired, and Hassan was left alone with Amina. According to the prescribed rules of their faith, he gently lifted the veil from her face, saying as he did so—'In the name of Allah, the compassionate, the merciful.'

But not strange to each other were those eyes that now exchanged their glances of unutterable



love. Not the blush of a timid virgin on first seeing the stranger who is hereafter to be her tyrant, was the rosy hue that tinged the neck of Amina as she listened in breathless silence to the prayer, which, according to Mohammedan rite, he uttered before he ventured to embrace his wedded bride. Placing his right hand on her head, he said, with a deep-toned earnestness, which thrilled to her heart—

‘ Oh, Allah, bless me in my wife, and bless my wife in me. Unite us, as thou hast united us, for our good, and separate us when thou hast decreed to do so, likewise for our good.’

Here let us take the veil which Hassan had removed from Amina’s head, and hang it over the portal of the room where their attachment is crowned with that ‘sober certainty of waking bliss,’ which heretofore they had only seen in the visions of hope and in the land of dreams.

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And now, gentle reader, having brought our hero and heroine to that haven where Love—whose bark has been so long buffeted by the waves of disappointment on the ocean of uncertainty—at length furls his sails and lets go his anchor, I had intended to bid thee farewell, leaving it to

thy imagination to conjecture the after lot of the other *dramatis personæ* of our tale; but having shown my MS. to Mr. Verjuice, an eminent critic, and contributor to the —— *Review*, he took upon himself to alter both the head and the tail of my story, in a manner that will appear in the following dialogue:—

MR. VERJUICE (*entering my room under considerable excitement, with my last chapter in his hand*).—Why, what the d—l is this? You surely do not mean to finish the tale thus abruptly, leaving the reader in ignorance of the fate of many of those in whose favour you have excited, or endeavoured to excite, his interest? Do you not see how, in every play, the *dramatis personæ* all come on the stage in the last scene to bid farewell to the audience, the hero and heroine in the centre, and the subordinate personages on either side? Your novel should be like a drama, *totus, teres atque rotundus*. And now, young man, let me proceed with my observations on your work——

AUTHOR (*interrupting him*).—I beg your pardon, Mr. Verjuice, I am not a young man.

MR. V. (*bitterly*).—More's the pity for you! At all events, you are young as a novel writer; this is, I believe, only your second; and your

first was written some ten years ago. Bad plan, sir; bad plan. You should write often, if you want to be read; keep your name before the public; have all the puffs which have been written by partial friends repeated frequently in newspaper advertisements by the side of Morrison's Pills, Hunt's Blacking, and Rowland's Macassar.

AUTHOR.—Good heavens! this from *you*, Mr. Verjuice! Surely no one would despise, no one would lash such proceedings more mercilessly than yourself.

MR. V. (*with a cynical smile*).—I might lash and despise; nevertheless, what I tell you is true. Such is the force of fashion with us, the merest trash by a well-known author will sell and be read, whilst a good book by an *incog.* struggles for years before it obtains notice.

AUTHOR.—Yes; but when it does obtain that notice it lives, whilst trash, although ushered in by a popular name, soon dies and is forgotten.

MR. V.—There you are wrong again. It is not forgotten, for it is bound up with the collective works of the celebrated writer; and however ashamed of it he may be afterwards, it is beyond his power to suppress it. Fortunately, this new bantling of yours has not yet got into the

clutches of the publisher, so we can still apply the pruning-knife.

Out with this 'Preface,' to begin with. Good ale needs no bush. Do you suppose that any critic's pen was ever blunted, or any reader's interest propitiated by being informed of the 'unfavourable circumstances' under which your book was written—'in hours snatched from more serious official occupation'—'on a journey, without access to books of reference,' 'liable to constant interruption,' &c. &c. &c. Bosh! bosh! Who do you think will care a straw to know all this? If your book has merit of any kind, it will be read; if not, it will be d——d, and line trunks. Out with the Preface, I say, and with this Introduction also. Who cares to look in a tale like this for observations on the state of Egypt, 'during its era of transition, when the romantic period of the mamelukes had passed away, and the overland route, Nile steam-boats, and other modern improvements, which marked the latter days of Mohammed Ali, were not yet called into existence.' Bosh! I say; let the reader find out the era and the state of Egypt from the contents of your tale. These whets to appetite, like the nip of brandy and anchovy before dinner, are out of date now; if the dinner be good, your guests

will eat it, if it be bad, they'll think twice before they dine with you again.

So saying, Mr. Verjuice ran his ruthless pen through my Preface and Introductory Chapter, in which I had laboured with all becoming modesty to propitiate the mercy of the critic and the favour of the reader. He proceeded—

‘I suppose that one reason why you terminated your story so abruptly, is, that you did not like to acknowledge to the reader that your hero, as soon as he had attained wealth and power, settled down into being an indolent Turkish Bey, forgetting the friends of his youth, and filling his harem with pretty Circassian slaves.’

AUTHOR (*indignantly*).—Not so, Mr. Verjuice ; Hassan never forgot a friend, neither did he ever permit another to share with Amina his affection or his bed. Abou-Hamedi became his wakeel, or steward, and faithfully discharged his trust, all his family living at Damanhour under the protection of Hassan, who was appointed Governor of that district. Abd-hoo was retained as his most confidential servant, and his two friends, Ahmed Aga and Reschid, both fought under his standard, when, many years after the conclusion of our tale, Hassan buckled on his armour, and contributed by his valour and skill, as general of a

division, to those victories of the Egyptian army in Syria and Asia Minor which placed Constantinople, had it not been for European interference, at the mercy of Mohammed Ali. Nor were Hassan's foster-parents, Sheikh Saleh and his family, forgotten by him in his prosperity. He secured to them fertile and extensive pastures for their cattle; yearly presents of horses, carpets, and other objects of Bedouin desire, testified his grateful remembrance of his early years under their care, and the friendly relations which, through them, he kept up with the other branches of the Oulâd-Ali, proved equally beneficial to the tribe and to the Viceroy.

Mr. V.—You have left it to the reader's sagacity to conjecture that Reschid, for whom Hassan entertained so strong a friendship, was no other than the young brother who had accompanied Zeinab Khanum and her sister on their first coming to Egypt.

AUTHOR.—True, Mr. Verjuice, I did not think it necessary to explain what resulted so evidently from the narrative. And now that you have asked these questions concerning the *dramatis personæ*, may I ask your opinion on the general merit of the work?

Mr. V.—No, sir, I only give my opinion *ex*

*cathedrá*. You will find it some day in the columns of the — *Review*; and, perhaps, not much to your satisfaction. Do the lawyer and physician give their professional opinions without a fee? But I have not yet done with my questions, although I suppose I need scarcely ask what became of Emily Thorpe. According to the rules of romance, she of course pined and died of a broken heart.

AUTHOR.—Not so, Mr. Verjuice; it was indeed long before she recovered from the effects of her first unfortunate attachment, and she never formed a second. I saw her some years ago at Bath, an old maid, respected by all for her amiable disposition and unostentatious charity. One evening a young guardsman was introduced at a *soirée* where she was present, whose striking figure and good looks were the theme of general conversation; the old lady looked at him steadfastly for a minute, then dropped her eyes behind her fan, and said with a sigh—she still had a sigh for old recollections—‘Not to be compared with Hassan, Child of the Pyramid.’

Mr. V.—Humph! Well, to proceed,—that rascal Demetri was doubtless hanged for theft or forgery before many years were past?

AUTHOR.—Far from it; after having pilfered, as

dragoman, a few more Nile-touring families, he set up a shop as bakkal, or grocer, in Alexandria ; from this the transition to the grade of merchant was not difficult ; in the latter capacity he contrived, by a judicious admixture of smuggling and fraudulent bankruptcy, to become one of the most wealthy and respectable Greek merchants in the Levant.

‘ Humph !’ again growled Mr. V. ; ‘ and pray did Mary Powell condescend to share the pretty pickings which Foyster had made in Mr. Thorpe’s service ?’

AUTHOR.—No ; on their return to England Mary married a young farmer in her own county, and Foyster opened a tavern, where he continued for many years to entertain his customers with medicated liquors and the marvels of the East.

Mr. V.—And that grossly illiterate pedant, Dr. Hieronymus Moss, what became of him ?

AUTHOR.—Hush ! my dear sir, do not speak irreverently of a man who has made so much sensation in the literary world ; are you not aware that it was he who, under the name of ‘ Aboulfeda Redivivus,’ wrote the ‘ Origines Orientales,’ and the Letters on the ‘ Comparative Philology and Idiosyncrasy of the East ?’

Mr. V.—Yes, yes ; I remember looking into his



farrago of trash—an ill-digested medley of facts stolen from Ockley, Pococke, D'Herbelot, and others; the deductions from these facts being all his own—*i. e.*, absurdities;—let him remain like one of his prototypes, 'LL.D. and ASS——'

AUTHOR (*in some alarm*).—Really, Mr. Verjuice, the bitterness of your satire is enough to terrify an author who has reason to apprehend that his work will be dissected in the —— *Review*; permit me to add, however, that I am disappointed at your not making any inquiry into the fate of one of our *dramatis personæ* in whom I myself felt much interest—I mean the poor dumb boy, Murad. You will, I trust, be glad to hear that he lived always with Hassan and Amina, by both of whom he was treated with an affectionate kindness that to his gentle and grateful nature more than compensated him for the mutilation and misfortune he had undergone in childhood.

Mr. V. (*in a meditative tone*).—Poor boy;—yet 'tis a pity there are not more like him.

AUTHOR.—Yes, truly, gentleness and gratitude——

Mr. V. (*interrupting him*).—Gentleness and gratitude—fiddle-de-dee,—when I said, pity that there are not more like him, I referred to his dumbness, not to his disposition; it is the tongue, sir, that

gets a man into numberless scrapes and makes him numberless enemies.

AUTHOR.—And the pen, Mr. Verjuice ?

MR. V. (*in a rage*).—‘ I understand your sarcastic insinuation, sir—beware !’ and so saying he left the room, banging the door after him with a violence that shook the slender brick-wall of the author’s Oriental apartment.

AUTHOR (*solus*).—Heavens ! what have I done ? Confound that unguarded sarcasm. Now, notwithstanding my having asked and followed the advice of this travelling critic, I shall see my poor tale dissected by his merciless hand in the columns of the ——— *Review*. It cannot now be helped : I have lived long enough in the East to know where to turn for consolation. ‘ What is past is past, and what is written will come to pass.’ Boy, bring me my kaliôn and a cup of coffee.

THE END.

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